

# The Organisation of a Land Occupation: A Case Study of Marikana, Cape Town

Rayner Teo / TXXRAY002

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## COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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## Abstract

Land invasions are a nationwide concern in South Africa. Though the academic literature and the media both assert that land invasions are highly-organised activities, "organisation" can cover (or conflate) a wide range of phenomena. What is the nature of "organisation" in a land invasion and the resulting informal settlement?

Drawing on mainstream social movement theory, I present and interpret evidence for how Marikana informal settlement in Cape Town took shape in August 2014. The land invasion emerged and succeeded not because of formal organisation (or indeed the tactics of an unknown collective actor—the "Third Force" hypothesis), but because of the political opportunity structure that the settlers faced, which they were only partially aware of; the networks and information that they were able to tap; and the identities and cultural frames that defined individual Marikana settlers and guided their actions. The fact that the majority of Marikana settlers were not connected to any mobilisation attempt—nor indeed knew anyone in Marikana before they arrived—shows that neither formal organisation nor informal activist networks are sufficient to explain Marikana's explosive growth. Rather, what enabled the invasion was the passive network (Bayat 1997a) of people sharing common, overlapping identities and recognising a common interest between each other, who came together in a space of opportunity.

I then turn to evidence of organisational activity as the land invasion developed into an informal settlement. Marikana residents organised structures of grassroots governance at various levels, engaging externally while stratifying internally. External players and the eviction process were crucial in forging the bottom-up governance structures that emerged. While these structures almost immediately began to resemble the repertoire of organisational routines which was familiar to the residents, some of the practices they adopted were more in line with the neighbourhood's status as a new informal settlement under consolidation. However, community leaders came and went, while episodes of infighting and conflict broke out sporadically as committees lost legitimacy and faced accusations of corruption, illustrating the dynamic and uncertain nature of the new informal settlement. The trend of increasing formalisation and bureaucratisation was not a linear progression. Finally, an episode of protest followed by violent clashes with a neighbouring community marked the culmination of a tactical trajectory of attempts to engage with the state.

This study develops and problematises the notion that land invasions are "organised," and—in the particular case of new informal settlements—helps to close the gap in knowledge about leadership and grassroots organising in South African social movements that others (Runciman 2011; Drivdal 2014, 20–21) have identified. And since millions of South Africans still live in inadequate housing, there is scope for agents on all sides—from policymakers to social movement participants—to reach a more systematic and productive understanding of how to deal with the inevitable formation of new informal settlements.

## Contents

Front matter	
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Contents .....	iv
Chapter 1 Introduction .....	1
Research questions.....	3
Data, methods, and challenges.....	8
A gap in the literature .....	12
Structure of the dissertation .....	15
Chapter 2 Profile: Who were the Marikana settlers? .....	18
Background and demographics.....	18
Demographics of Marikana.....	21
Access to services .....	24
Household size and structure .....	25
Vulnerable populations and social grant receipt.....	28
Previous house .....	29
Coming to Marikana .....	30
Personal accounts.....	30
Survey data.....	33
Networks and information diffusion .....	36
Organising in Marikana .....	38
Socio-political attitudes .....	40
Gender.....	40
Xenophobia.....	42
Participation and protest .....	47
Conclusion .....	51
Chapter 3 Emergence: The founding of Marikana .....	54
Theories of social movements and collective action .....	56
A chronology of Marikana.....	60
An antecedent in Mthawelanga: November 2012.....	62
The first founding of Marikana: April 2013 .....	63
The 28/4/2013 – 1/5/2013 eviction operation.....	65
After the eviction .....	66
The second founding of Marikana: August 2014 .....	67
The 3/8/2014 – 5/9/2014 eviction operation.....	71
Implications.....	75
Organisation in the Marikana land invasion .....	76
Why did Marikana happen? Other contributing factors .....	78
From individual goals to a collective tactic? .....	78
A shared cultural frame.....	82
Land invasion as the product of a passive network .....	85
Conclusion .....	87

Chapter 4 Organising: Consolidating Marikana .....	90
Theory: Perspectives on organisation .....	91
Literature review: SMOs in the new South Africa .....	94
The emergence of grassroots governance structures in Marikana .....	98
Identity .....	105
Committee consolidation .....	108
Committee membership .....	109
Development from "task team" to "committee" and "development forum" .....	110
Approval and legitimacy .....	119
Practices of grassroots governance in Marikana .....	123
Marikana leaders' goals .....	124
Internal ordering: justice and dispute resolution .....	126
Internal efforts at development .....	130
External non-state engagement .....	134
Engagement with the state .....	135
Conclusion .....	145
Chapter 5 Conclusion .....	148
Contributions of this study .....	153
End matter .....	
Appendix 1: Fieldwork record .....	157
Appendix 2: Interview guide for Marikana residents and leaders .....	159
Appendix 3: Questionnaire .....	161
Bibliography .....	169
Postscript 1: On the role of the observer .....	181
Postscript 2: The meeting as an alternative unit of analysis .....	185

## Chapter 1 Introduction

Land invasion—a swift takeover of land for housing needs, without the permission of the owner—is a national concern in South Africa. Informal settlements have sprung up in South Africa as long ago as 1834, when newly-freed slaves put up shelters on the periphery of Cape Town (Harrison 1992). The dynamics and local politics of land invasion have been documented at least since the 1940s (Stadler 1979; Cole 1987). They have more recently entered the tactical repertoire of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), a new political party (Magubane 2015; Damba 2015). Land invasions have been organised to meet local needs, and at times used to exert political pressure (Mabin 1992, 20; Gigaba and Maharaj 1996; Guillaume and Houssay-Holzschuch 2002). Larger land invasions have also been interpreted as part of deliberate "ungovernability campaigns," drawing parallels with the mass civil mobilisations that drew the curtains on apartheid (Phakathi 2015). However, informal settlements may also form in an organic way, as "encroachments" of individual households (cf. Crankshaw 1993). Whether deliberate or disorganised, informal settlers tend to face pressure from the authorities once detected; they in turn demand tenure security, utilities, and policing. The way settlers mobilise to achieve this is another puzzle: what happens after a land invasion becomes entrenched and leaves the media spotlight? Here, I use the emergence and ongoing organising of the Marikana informal settlement, Philippi, Cape Town, to illustrate these processes—one of the few case studies of informal settlement emergence to have been done since the democratic transition.

Over the first three weeks of August 2014, people built about 5500 structures on a 49-hectare vacant field in Philippi East, Cape Town, including not just 'hokkies' (houses) but also churches, crèches, spaza shops, and shebeens (bars).<sup>1</sup> By end-2014, around 7500

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<sup>1</sup> *Hokkie*: Afrikaans word meaning *kennel*, often used by residents to refer to the informal structures they lived in. A local leader in a different informal settlement told me that he considered it insulting to refer to people's houses as 'shacks.' I therefore use 'house' or 'hokkie' interchangeably in this paper. *Spaza*: convenience store

households had moved to the new land occupation, totalling an estimated 21,200 residents. They adopted the name *Marikana* while under (in their view) constant harassment and suppression from law enforcement agencies, which made them relate to the striking Marikana miners under fire from the South African Police Services (cf. Alexander et al. 2012). But this was not the first wave of settlement on the land that later became Marikana. Various sources dated the occupation back to April 2013 or even November 2012. However, the vast majority of settlers came to the land in August 2014, and this last wave was the focus of my work. Was this a story of mobilisation by "elements of the community," as an affidavit from the landowners claimed (Power 2014); was it a "planned and carefully orchestrated" manoeuvre, as an officer of the City's Anti-Land Invasion Unit argued ; or was it a rumour "gone viral," as Marikana residents asserted (RP10<sup>2</sup> 6/3/2015)? I attempted to answer this question using semi-structured interviews, chats, observations, court documents, media reports, internal notes from the meetings of committees in Marikana, and a household survey designed to be representative of the Marikana community. This involved 27 site visits and 40 formal interviews with residents, committee members, and local activists and officials, as well as innumerable casual conversations which revealed information about Marikana residents' motivations, goals, and identity, spanning over seven months as the Marikana story unfolded.

Nor was Marikana's emergence the only story to be told. There were ongoing court battles to secure their right to stay on land that was not legally theirs, fought with the help of community activists and external organisations. There were battles to secure recognition from the municipal government of the residents' entitlement to a full range of services and utilities—water, toilets, waste removal. And there was infighting, too, in the form of struggles

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usually selling food, necessities like paraffin, and airtime for mobile phones (see Spiegel 2005). *Shebeen*: bar or tavern, often equipped with a sound system, television, and a pool table.

<sup>2</sup> I anonymise my informants throughout, except where permission was sought to use real names or pseudonyms. None of the named informants live in Marikana. "RP" refers to Rolihlahla Park, and "MA" – "ME" to Marikana sections A – E; "MDF" refers to the Marikana Development Forum, a top-level committee in Marikana. Informants referred to as "A" are external activists.



against crime and criminals, physical violence against members of rival committees, and banishment of leaders accused of corruption. This story of collective action was not a one-off event, but an ongoing, dynamic process.

### **Research questions**

Three purposes of social science research are commonly identified: *exploration*, *description*, and *explanation* (Babbie 2010, 92–94). Some also aim to *empower* those at their site of study through participatory research methodologies (Cancian 1993; Croteau 2005; Marshall and Rossman 2006, 33–34). I was conscious from the beginning of my ignorance of the socio-political conditions and context of my research site, and the limitations of my time and resources; it was not, therefore, conceived as a participatory or emancipatory study. There were elements of exploration and explanation in my work, but this study was conceptualised primarily as a *description* of a particular set of events, using concepts from social movement studies and organisational theory to guide the outsider's understanding of those events.

In my first interviews in early November 2014, my curiosity and the informants' own interests predominated. While informants focused on the attempted eviction, I wanted to know more about the task teams and committees that they were forming, and how they proposed to get services from the City. Over the course of meeting and speaking with local leaders and residents, attending court hearings, and reading media reports, this evolved into a focus on two stages of organisation in the Marikana settlement: was the "land invasion" organised? And what was the nature of organising since the land invasion?

It also became clear that the first question did not have a simple yes/no answer. Rather, it hinged on the definition of *organisation*—a nebulous label that can cover (or conflate) a wide range of activities and degrees of institutionalisation or formalisation. Tarrow (2011, 123–24) points out that organisation has at least three different meanings: the "advocacy

organisation", a corporate body with a defined structure that aims to effect or arrest social change; the "interpersonal network" that marshals activists and resources even in the absence of formal structure; or the process (which may be highly unorganised or decentralised) of mustering resources towards collective action when facing an opponent. For the rest of this dissertation, therefore, I will attempt to avoid ambiguity by referring to the structure as *organisation* or *organisational structure* and the process as *organising*.

Furthermore, the idea of 'organisation' can be turned into an accusation and used to deny legitimacy. The landowners' and municipal government's moral case against the occupiers rested in part on the assertion that some directing agency (cf. Zikode 2006) was behind the Marikana invasion. This is an old misconception.<sup>3</sup> For their part, the residents presented themselves as coming together of their own accord, with no planning and preparation—just the common grievances of suffering from unemployment, high rents, and unbearable landlords. Neither story was complete. I find that the truth was somewhere in the middle: while networks had formed through mass meetings, and mobilised over the course of the land invasion, the event gathered a self-catalytic momentum.

On the part of the residents, it is clear that their grievances are ever-present and shared not just by the people who moved to Marikana but by many who didn't. McCarthy and Zald (1977, citing Turner and Killian 1972, 251) asserted that "'there is always enough discontent in any society to supply the grass-roots support for a movement if the movement is effectively organized and has at its disposal the power and resources of some established elite group'." This means that the 'why' question (why did Marikana happen) is not precise enough—mobilisation cannot be explained by deprivation or even the *perception* of deprivation, because there are equivalent circumstances and perceptions elsewhere (in other

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<sup>3</sup> No less a figure than struggle stalwart and first Minister of Housing, Joe Slovo, said in 1994 that "In a number of cases, land invasions are being *orchestrated* by outsiders who do not have the best interests of [landless] people at heart, but who are instigating such actions for their own personal and political gains." (Slovo 1994, quoted in Gigaba and Maharaj 1996, 217, emphasis mine)

societies or among other individual actors) which do not produce equivalent mobilisations. This assertion was central to a shift in social movement studies, away from the focus on shared deprivation and beliefs, and towards the *resource mobilisation* paradigm. Here, this same assertion also poses a puzzle to be solved: if there is always enough 'discontent' for a land occupation, why did the Marikana land occupation happen *at this moment in time*, and not any other? Given these caveats, the first question had to be revised:

*RQ1a: In what sense was the Marikana land invasion "organised"?*

*RQ1b: What made the Marikana land invasion possible?*

Grassroots organising in the new Marikana settlement was also an impenetrable puzzle to the uninformed outsider. When I first visited Marikana on 30 Oct 2014—a mere two months after the last major Anti-Land Invasion Unit operation—residents had already begun to form "task teams" and "section committees." I first made contact with residents under one of these structures. But when I wanted to go further I was told that I had to seek the permission of the other committee before I ventured over to the areas that they "controlled." Moreover, relations between these two groups were poor, and physical violence broke out not long after my first visit. This kept me from expanding the scope of my fieldwork for three months of repeatedly postponed meetings and other delays in obtaining permission through intermediaries, until I simply walked over, introduced myself to committee members, and worked towards finding the top leadership there.

Clearly, committees play an important role in the Marikana informal settlement. But what role is this? And why do people feel the need to have committees in the first place? Answers were often uninformative: "every place must have a leader" was a common trope. So, guided by the South African literature on street committees and other grassroots governance structures, as well as concepts from the social movement and organisational studies literatures, I began to collect data about the role, emergence and consolidation of the committees. The second question thus became:

*RQ2a: Having already settled Marikana, how and why did the residents organise themselves?*

*RQ2b: What is the nature and role of these community organisations and local governance structures in a new informal settlement?*

In addressing these questions I drew on the 'mainstream' (Flacks 2004) of social movement theory, as defined by contributions such as McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald (1996a), McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (1997), Della Porta and Diani (2006) and Tarrow (2011). They identify three sets of factors that affect social movements: political opportunities, mobilising structures, and cultural or ideational frames (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996b).

A pitfall of this approach is that different units of analysis have been used by various authors: collective action, social movements, and social movement organisations (SMOs). For collective action, I adopt Tilly's definition: "all joint effort on behalf of shared interests" (1995, 16). For social movements and SMOs, McCarthy and Zald's (1977, 1217–18) is used: "A social movement is a set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structures and/or reward distribution of a society. [...] A social movement organization (SMO) is a complex, or formal, organization which identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or a countermovement and attempts to implement those goals."

This definition of social movement is atypically broad, encompassing *preferences* which may be held by social movement participants and nonparticipants alike. But it makes the point that while no social movement can reach all the members of what Gamson (1975, 14–16) called its "target of mobilisation"—the *constituency* that would-be challengers aim to activate and eventually mobilise for collective action—nonparticipants nonetheless remain members of that constituency. From another perspective, the framing paradigm in social movement studies considers the shaping of concepts and worldviews which in turn guide individual and collective action. Frames thus define a movement; they (and those who share

those frames) must be considered part of the object of study (Snow et al. 1986; Benford and Snow 2000).

Nevertheless, the distinction between *social movement* and *social movement organisation* is sometimes blurred. Most of the work on South African social movements uses the term *social movement* for an institutionalised structure with some degree of permanency that might better be described as a *social movement organisation*.<sup>4</sup> Della Porta and Diani (2006, 25) argue that "analytical confusion" may result if concepts useful for SMO study, such as tactics or membership, are adopted for social movements, which are more loosely structured. Gamson (1975, 14–16) distinguished between three possible constituencies for social movements: targets of *mobilisation* (potential participants in an SMO), *benefits* (the group that stands to gain from the fulfilment of the SMO's demands), and *influence* (the group that can implement or concede the desired change). Targets of mobilisation and benefits may or may not belong to the SMO, but they are definitely part of the social movement. This problem of conceptual slippage can be avoided with careful attention. The unit of analysis I employ for answering RQ1 is the collective action; for RQ2, I focus on the social movement organisation.

As McAdam and Scott note (2005, 12), social movement studies and organisational studies have cross-fertilised extensively. While social movement studies has focused on the behaviour of emerging contenders or on the question of whether organisation helps or harms a movement (ibid.; Gamson 1975; Piven and Cloward 1979; Clemens and Minkoff 2004), organisational studies provides a toolkit with which to analyse emergent and existing organisational forms and routines (Scott 2003; Aldrich and Ruef 2006). Therefore, I borrow ideas from organisational theory to answer the second set of research questions, focusing on the emergent organisations as well as their practices.

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<sup>4</sup> Though this usage better respects what the organisations call themselves.

## **Data, methods, and challenges**

Past literature has tended to explain the formation of informal settlements using macro-level factors, typically some combination of poverty or demography, and shifts in political opportunity structure (Stadler 1979; Wilkinson 1981; Sapire 1992; Harrison 1992). But this underrepresents the role of individual actors' agency, while privileging the structural perspective. More recent case studies of land invasions have begun to offer more detail (cf. Adler 1994; Saff 1996; Gigaba and Maharaj 1996; Skuse and Cousins 2007). Nevertheless, "community micro-politics" deserves to be described and problematised (Bénit-Gbaffou and Katsaura 2014; Drivdal 2014), and this is particularly true of nascent land invasions and occupations given that little recent work has been done on it in the context of South Africa's newly-expanded socioeconomic rights jurisprudence (Sunstein 2001; Huchzermeyer 2003) and changing civil society scene (Ngwane 2012; Bond 2012).

In principle, there are several ways one could answer the question of what makes a large-scale land invasion possible: a large-n econometric study, an ethnography, or a piece of investigative journalism. However, because of my limitations, especially my position as an outsider in the field, I turned to a case study approach.

One could conduct a large-n neighbourhood-level study of the potential for land invasion. This would collect data on factors affecting the likelihood of land invasions, including material and perceptual measures of deprivation. This would resemble Fauvelle-Aymar and Segatti's (2012) work on the antecedents of anti-foreigner violence in 2008, which was based on ward-level data. One could then estimate a binary choice model with the occurrence of land invasion as the dependent variable, and draw causal inferences with the aid of theory. But to my knowledge no such study has been conducted for land invasions, perhaps because of its data-intensive nature.

One might also conduct a deep ethnography comparing case studies of land invasions with comparable neighbourhoods where undeveloped land is available but has not been settled yet. Life histories (including histories of activism and the history of community organising in the area) would be important, as would understanding the dynamics of landlord-backyarder relations and of household formation in each of the areas—two major sources of would-be land invaders. This could reveal data about differences between the aspirations and domestic practices of land invaders and non-land invaders that other methods would not. However, it would also require an extended period of immersion in the daily life of several settlements, as well as language skills, both of which were not practicable with my prior experience.

It could also be possible to take a "journalistic" or narrative approach, going around on the day of the land invasion or soon after, attempting to understand what triggered the event based on participants' accounts. Sinwell et al. (2009), for instance, took this approach following service delivery protests in mid-2009. However, this approach depends on being in the right place at the right time. Also, given that land invasion is technically unlawful, the immediacy of the situation may limit the truthfulness or completeness of the responses that the researcher can obtain, as well as the trust and rapport that can be established between the researcher and potential informants. Depth is sacrificed for immediacy. And in land invasions facing eviction—as was the case in Marikana—this approach may expose the researcher to volatile and violent situations.

Instead, I chose to approach Marikana as the subject of a case study of land invasions and occupations. The case was unique, as a sudden and massive<sup>5</sup> 'flood' of settlers rather than a gradual, small encroachment. And despite claims by municipal officials that it had been 'organised,' no formal organisation had claimed responsibility for it. Abahlali baseMjondolo

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<sup>5</sup> The municipal Directorate of Human Settlements believed that it was the largest since Siqualo, Mitchells Plain, in 2011, and that it accounted for a typical year's growth in the number of informal dwellings in Cape Town (Sims 22/4/2015)

was inactive in Cape Town; Ses'khona claimed only to have arrived after the eviction operation; and the EFF only announced its land invasion "programme" in November 2014, three months after the August 2014 Marikana land invasion. I had the advantage of relative immediacy, conducting my work while the experience was still fresh in participants' minds, but some months after it so that they could feel secure enough in their situation to be able to discuss it frankly with an outsider.

A downside of the single case study approach is that the findings here are not generalizable. I do not make any claims about the tendency of South African urban land invasions to be organised or unorganised, or about the nature of organisation thereafter. However, I do make a claim that it is *possible* for a large land invasion to take place with a fairly minimal core organisation, and in Chapter 3 I document what that "organisation" entailed.

While Marikana developed, I collected survey and interview data in my fieldwork over the October 2014 – June 2015 period. Interviews were mainly conducted in English, with a few in Xhosa with translation help from an experienced fieldworker at UCT's Centre for Social Science Research. My interviewees' command of English generally ranged from conversant to fluent, more than adequate for my work—gathering narratives of events, as well as socio-political attitudes. Whenever it was inadequate, I came back with a translator. Approximately 160 household surveys were done, mostly by a team of Xhosa-speaking facilitators from a Khayelitsha, Cape Town-based NGO, except for respondents I personally interviewed. 149 were left when non-consent and incomplete cases were eliminated. These formed a randomised 2% sample of the Marikana households. Additional information was provided by court documents and a trove of notes on various internal meetings which I was generously given access to, though these covered only part of the period of interest.



The emergence of Marikana was not an easy story to uncover. Residents of the "original" Marikana land occupation dating to 2013 first told me to "come back later" because of ill-will between 'old' and 'new' residents. Later, they said that tensions between older and newly-elected members of their leadership would make it difficult for them to speak to me. In the end, I could only document their area through two former leaders who no longer lived in Marikana for personal reasons. Among the residents who had arrived in the second wave of occupation, rival committees had been organised among the residents, which did not trust each other. As I had started my fieldwork in one of these committees' areas, residents on the "other side" would stop me, asking questions like, "I saw you working on that side last week; why are you coming here?"

In areas where I obtained the approval of the relevant local leadership, residents displayed a range of reactions from receptive to curious to wary to (once) hostile—though I was never made to feel unsafe. Marikana leaders had warned their constituents not to speak to outsiders or sign forms, for fear that the municipal government or the landowners' legal team might collect information that would harm their interests, or residents might somehow inadvertently sign away their rights. So while conducting a household survey in Marikana, one of my team members was held up by about 30 residents who refused to allow her to conduct the questionnaire, because they refused to read the consent form (though it was prepared both in Xhosa and English). I had to distribute copies to elder residents among the crowd, show my student identification, and take questions from the residents before their suspicions abated and I could proceed with the original interviewee. Sometimes, it was only after being seen in the company of a local leader that residents relented in their suspicions towards me. And even so, some continued to be guarded about details because of the unlawful beginnings of the land occupation.

Aside from issues of trust, it was a mixed bag to be documenting events as they happened. Recall error was generally not an issue, and different people could be found to give their perspectives on the same events and actors. Unfortunately this immediacy also meant that committee members and even entire committees came and went in my time working in Marikana. And because they were new in their jobs, these leaders sometimes had nothing to report when I asked questions about contingencies that had not occurred or decisions that had not yet been taken. Committee members were also preoccupied with day-to-day problems and constrained by regional ANC and South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) power struggles, hindering some lines of questioning but facilitating others.

Violence in Marikana meant that several informants requested for their identities to be protected, for their own safety. I have assigned codes to all the Marikana interviewees, and named external respondents only when permission was granted. For safety, and also in the interest of not harming working relations between the various leaders and structures, it would not have been appropriate to return the full research to the participants for comments—unlike the laudable approach taken by researchers such as van Heusden and Pointer (2006). Therefore, this was not conceived as a participatory-emancipatory study.

### **A gap in the literature**

Several features of this study differentiate it from work that has been previously carried out on South Africa's informal settlements. The Marikana informal settlement is new, which means that no work has hitherto been published on Marikana. Moreover, this study presents the most comprehensive and systematic analysis of the land invasion as a collective action I am aware of, and furnishes details on community organising in a new land occupation. Lastly, it may be useful for policymakers to understand the possible trajectories which land invasions might take, in order to better respond to or manage them.

Several studies have been published on the formation of new informal settlements in South Africa. Cole's (1987) study of the beginnings of Crossroads, Cape Town, is the most comprehensive, but Stadler (1979), Wilkinson (1981), Harrison (1992), Sapire (1992), Adler (1994), Gigaba and Maharaj (1996), Saff (1996), Barry (2006), and Barry et al. (2007) also document pre-1994 settlement formation in major South African cities. Cole's study focused on Crossroads during the height of the "organised urbanisation" phase of urban apartheid, while the first two documented the "squatter movement" of the 1940s, Harrison's and Sapire's are historical overviews, and the rest were situated in the transition from apartheid. These occurred in a different legal and political context, which has implications for the land occupiers' tactical and organisational choices. The three examples in post-apartheid Cape Town are Skuse and Cousins (2007), who document the emergence of Nkanini in Khayelitsha, Barry et al. (2007) dealing with Wallacedene, and Thorn and Oldfield (2011; Thorn 2008) writing about Zille-Raine Heights, Grassy Park. Oldfield (2000) deals with the invasion, by a group called the "Door Kickers," of a public housing project in Delft South that had already been built.

Out of these, few deal with the question of whether the land invasion or squat was organised, and none explicitly addresses or defines the concept of "organisation." Two studies which do contain useful details are Thorn (2008) and Oldfield (2000). Thorn (2008, 14) tells us that community meetings took place monthly from June 2005 till when the residents moved in to occupy Zille-Raine Heights in 2006. Another case, the Door-Kickers' group, was organised outside the Delft South housing office by disgruntled residents tired of returning daily to check on the progress of their housing allocation (Oldfield 2000, 866). Though Oldfield observes that they had 'leaders', it appears that the group fulfilled two main functions—spreading information about what tactics would work in confrontations between legal residents of the housing project (in whose houses they were squatting), and providing

resources such as locks, whistles, or safe houses in which to take care of children—but she does not report, for instance, hierarchies of order/subordination. She distinguishes between the Kickers' organisational form when they were defending the squat, and the street committees that took shape *after* they had won the legal right to stay in those houses, but provides scant details of organisational practices in the later phase. In other studies, though the background conditions of deprivation and poverty are recorded—some in great narrative detail—and in most cases the proximate triggers of the land invasion are identified, the actual organising work that went into it is poorly-documented. We thus have collective mobilisations without much detail on the mechanism of action.

It might be feared that I am hurting the land occupiers' interests by searching for evidence of *organising*, the very evidence that the municipal government needs to make their case against the land invaders. If the Marikana settlers' need for housing was so dire (the argument might go), the land invasion would have taken place without organising; the fact that the collective action was organised, or planned, suggests that these settlers' need was not really so great. I have two answers to this argument. First, it is grounded on an artificially dichotomous conception of *need*. Besides an adequately-serviced shelter, informal settlers also need access to schools, jobs, social networks that insulate them from income shocks, and flexible housing financing options that are suitable for the variability of their income. Housing is a *process*, not a product, that is constantly being reshaped to juggle between these needs, priorities, and constraints of its inhabitants (Turner 1972; Gilbert and Gugler 1982, 86–87; Perlman 1987; Kellett and Napier 1995). The fact that these settlers moved from their previous housing means that, in their assessment, Marikana satisfied their needs better. Moreover, the empirical facts speak for themselves: I found that most Marikana settlers simply moved when they saw the opportunity, without having had any prior contact with the settlers who were already part of the land invasion. The usual sense of the word

"organisation" misrepresents the behaviour of these settlers. In any case, when probing bureaucrats and police officers about the nature of this "organisation" of which they spoke, it was difficult to get a clear account of precisely what they meant by that word. This is my first contribution to the literature—the nature of *organisation* in a land occupation—for which I draw on the literature on social movements and collective action.

According to Mangin (1967, 69–70), Latin American informal settlements which form through an organised land invasion tend to see the persistence of that organising (cf. Gigaba and Maharaj 1996; Oldfield 2000); otherwise, groups soon emerge to promote the invaders' interests. Many of the earlier South African studies cited above document eventful histories of informal settlements, including the creation and (s)election of committees (Cole 1987; Saff 1996, 244), the adoption of organisational forms like street committees and civic organisations common throughout townships (Adler 1994, 103), and the involvement of external activists and organisations (Adler 1994, 116; Saff 1996, 244; Oldfield 2000, 867). I therefore tried to confirm if grassroots organising generally fits the picture in the rest of the literature; I also probed for greater detail on the election procedure and the functions of local leadership. This work was primarily descriptive, though it contributes to a better understanding of the repertoire of organisational forms and practices in South African informal settlements.

Given the legal protections developed for unlawful occupiers of land in South Africa, the role of government is not just to prevent land invasions but also manage them. Among other things, this means that policymakers must understand how to engage with leaders of new land occupations more proactively, before they resort to barricades to get their point across. Through this work I hope to provide the basis for such understanding.

### **Structure of the dissertation**

The dissertation is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 describes Marikana and its residents. I present the findings of a randomised household survey I conducted in Marikana in March–May 2015, as well as casual conversations conducted while administering the questionnaire. Topics covered include demographics and household structure, social capital (networks, trust, and security), information diffusion, the experience of eviction, and attitudes towards their street committees and pertinent socio-political issues. Of interest is evidence showing that Marikana residents were no more likely than the general South African population to participate in attacks against foreign neighbours and shopkeepers; that they supported a dual repertoire of protest and voting to press demands for service delivery (as theorised by Booysen 2007); and importantly for chapter 3, that neither formal organisation nor interpersonal networks account for the vast majority of Marikana settlers, particularly if we only consider people who arrived in the July–August 2014 land invasion wave.

Chapter 3 takes this empirical fact, as well as the dichotomy between stealthy *encroachment* and speedy *invasion* in past studies of spontaneous settlements, as its points of departure. First, I describe two preceding land invasions before the main Marikana wave of July and August 2014. I present evidence that the structure of political opportunities had shifted in favour of the land invaders after the South African Police Services and the Cape Town municipal government came under intense media and political scrutiny following an unrelated eviction in early June 2014. I argue that the emergence of the land invasion can be understood as a combination of a collective action frame and what Bayat (1997a, 16) has termed the "passive networks" of people recognising, without needing to communicate, their shared interests. The land invasion was its own organising medium. The assumption of "organisation," typical in the literature on land invasions and in the popular understanding of how land invasions develop, is thus too simplistic to describe the dynamics of this episode of collective action.

Chapter 4 describes the organisational forms, practices, and routines adopted by the emergent structures of grassroots governance in Marikana. In the midst of the eviction operations conducted by the municipal Anti-Land Invasion Unit, three governance structures emerged. Consolidation and conflict reduced these to two. I document how they emerged, consolidated, bureaucratised, built hierarchies, and engaged with external bodies. It appears that their organisational forms and practices were formed in response to external pressure and internal demands, and largely in keeping with those in other areas—except for their management of property disputes and their attempts to control vigilante justice, which may be due to Marikana's status as a new land occupation under consolidation. Marikana also formulated a tactical trajectory of engagement with the municipal government, the outcome of which is described at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 5 summarises findings, limitations, and contribution to the literature.

## **Chapter 2 Profile: Who were the Marikana settlers?**

I conducted a randomised household survey in Marikana from mid-March 2015 to the beginning of May with the help of facilitators from a Khayelitsha-based NGO. 149 surveys were returned with written informed consent, with a refusal rate of 15%. One or two adult members of the household were interviewed for data on the demographic profile of the household, how basic needs were taken care of, and their depth of social capital, evaluation of their committees, and attitudes to socio-political issues. Fieldworkers were instructed to interview the owner of each house, and failing that, the owner's partner, or any other adult. An extra adult household member (preferably opposite-gender) was interviewed for some attitudinal questions, to balance out gender ratios and to get a larger opinion sample—but household sizes in Marikana were so small that only 19 extra respondents were found. This chapter introduces the layout of Marikana, and presents data from the survey and some qualitative material gathered in the course of fieldwork. These data, together with information gathered from the semi-structured interviews, form the basis for the analysis in the next two chapters.

I found a generally young, able-bodied, trusting, secure community. Importantly, 51% of the respondents moved to Marikana after having seen it for themselves (rather than hearing about it from a friend or relative), and 65% of respondents moved to Marikana without knowing anyone there beforehand. Considering only the two months that the land invasion actually took place, July and August 2014, these percentages rise to 67% and 73%. This has important implications for the story of the Marikana land invasion—the subject of the next chapter.

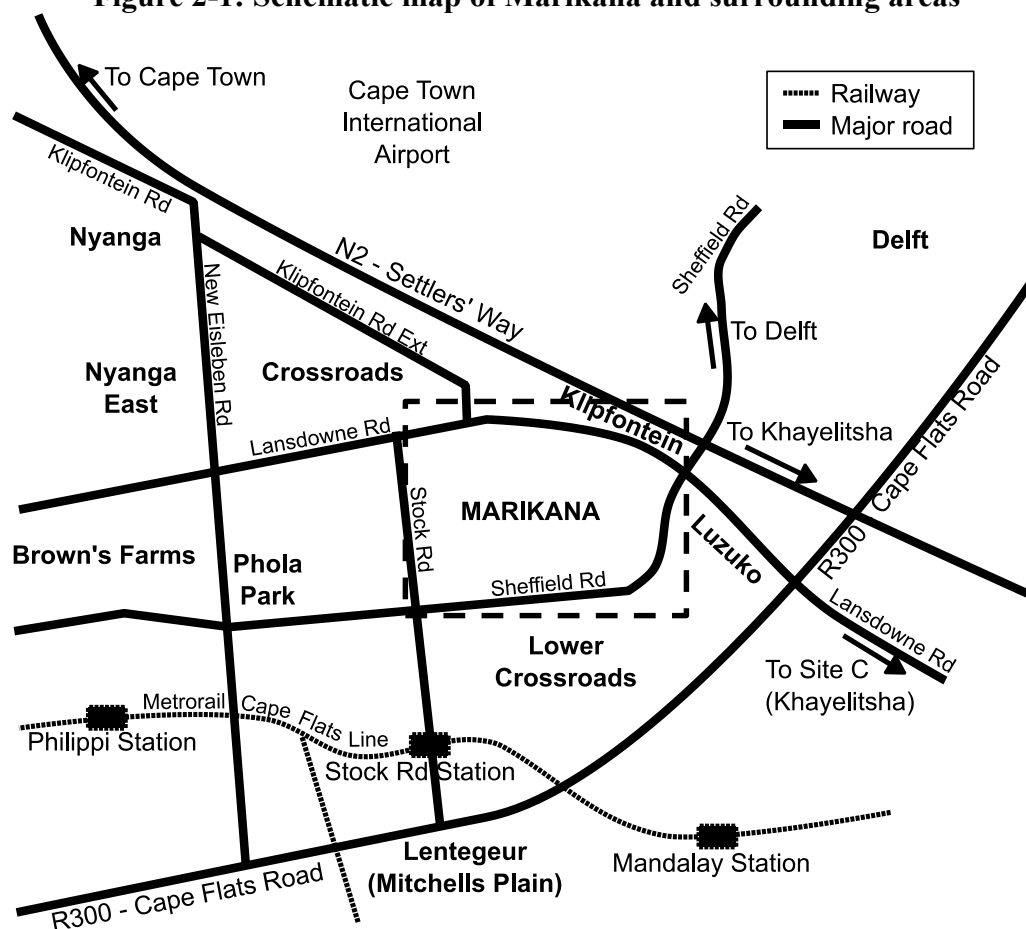
### **Background and demographics**

Marikana is situated in Philippi, Cape Town, south of the airport and west of Khayelitsha (see Figure 2-1). On its north side it is bounded by Lanzerac Road—which runs



parallel to Lansdowne Road (now Govan Mbeki Road); Sheffield Road is its southern boundary, and Stock Road runs to the west. To the south is the formal area of Lower Crossroads; to the north and east, the Klipfontein area on both sides of Lansdowne Road (a mix of formal and informal housing on land owned by the Methodist church), as well as several auto workshops, a dumpsite, low-lying vegetated areas, and a graveyard used by Klipfontein residents, and to the west, warehouses and large stores along both sides of Stock Road.

**Figure 2-1: Schematic map of Marikana and surrounding areas**

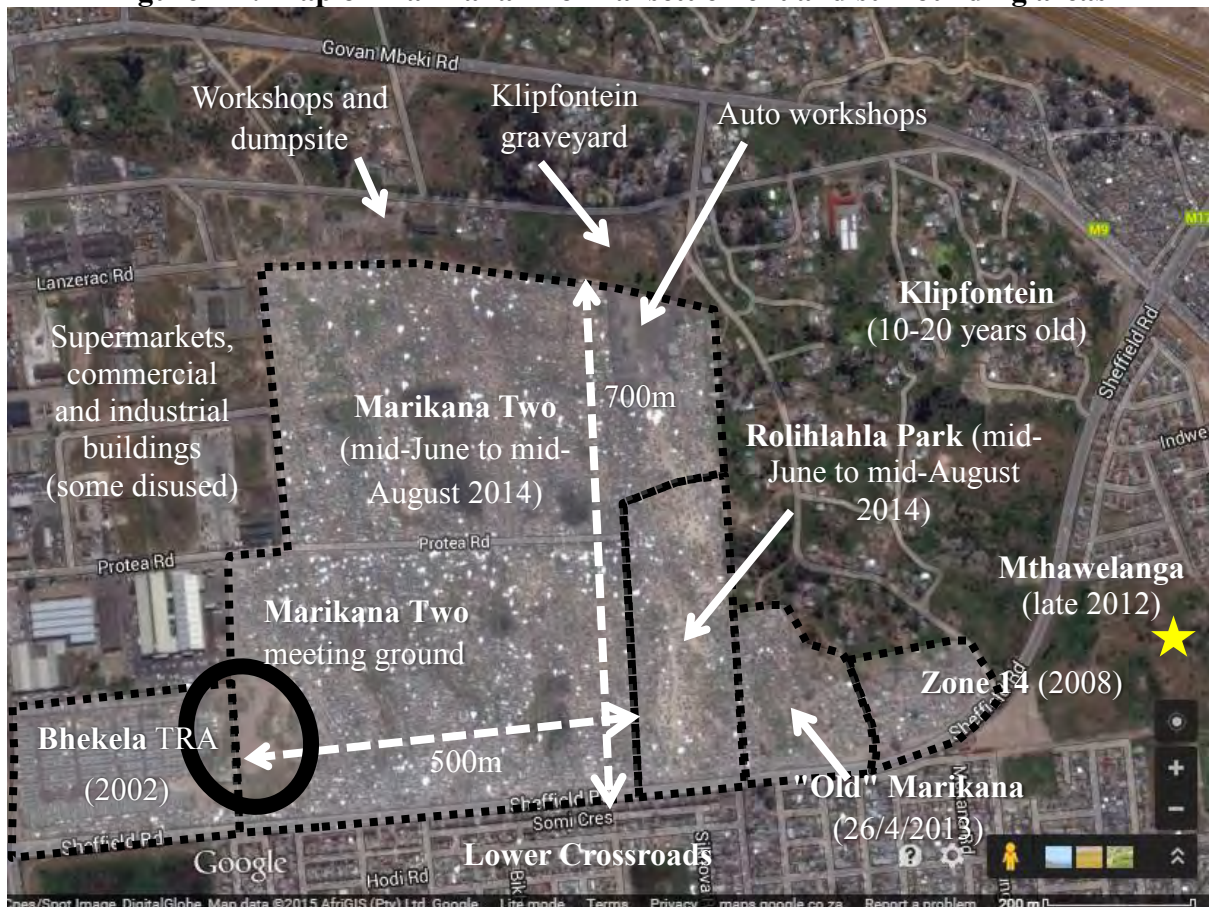


Location of Marikana in relation to nearby townships: Nyanga, Crossroads, other areas of Philippi (Brown's Farms, Phola Park, and Lower Crossroads), Delft, and Khayelitsha. Dashed box denotes the approximate area of Figure 2-2.

Figure 2-2 shows the different sections of Marikana. Marikana formed from several land invasions; the chronology is set out in Chapter 3. The March-April 2013 wave became known as **Old Marikana** or **Marikana One**; it was mostly on Erf 150, a plot of land belonging to Mrs Iris Fischer. A second wave of settlement in July-August 2014 radiated out

west of Old Marikana, producing three new rival leaderships: **Rolihlahla Park**, **Marikana Two**, and the **Old Committee** (a name applied by the Marikana Two leadership).

**Figure 2-2: Map of Marikana informal settlement and surrounding areas**



Protea Road, in the middle of Figure 2-2, divides Marikana Two. Between Sheffield Road and Protea Road, Marikana Two consists of three sections of about 1400–1500 houses each, divided east-to-west, with Section A next to Bhekela, and Section C next to Rolihlahla Park. A further two sections lie on the other side of Protea Road, divided north-to-south along an old path that predates Marikana. Section E is the furthest north. Marikana Two holds meetings in a large field between Bhekela and Marikana Two (circled). The location of Mthawelanga, a failed land invasion in Nov 2012, is marked by a star. Satellite image source: Google Maps.

Surrounding areas included Klipfontein, Bhekela, and Zone 14. To the east and north was **Klipfontein Mission Station**, an informal settlement established over 20 years ago on land owned by the Methodist church. To the southwest was "**Bhekela**"<sup>6</sup> **Temporary Relocation Area (TRA)** housing about 500 households from Nyanga since 2002—the last batch of intended beneficiaries of the N2 Gateway housing project. Marikana Two used a large open field between Bhekela and Marikana for mass meetings. **Zone 14**<sup>7</sup> to the east of

<sup>6</sup> Referred to by residents as *Bhekela Ndilale*, Xhosa for *move aside, I [want to] sleep*

<sup>7</sup> Named after a TV soap opera

the original Marikana land invasion was a small informal settlement established in 2007.

**Mthawelanga** was a failed land invasion attempt in November 2012 (see Chapter 3).

At the end of my fieldwork in mid-May 2015, three leaderships remained in total within Marikana, with fairly cordial relations: the Old Marikana committee, the Rolihlahla Park committee, and the Marikana Development Forum with its five section committees (A to E).

Marikana consisted of just under 8000 households on 49 hectares of land (Sims 22/4/2015). The "old" Marikana land occupation won the right to stay on the land in a Western Cape High Court decision handed down on 28/11/2014; 256 households were authorised to stay there. Rolihlahla Park's boundaries were contested, so the committee covered about 400–500 households; its approximate north boundary was an old sand path which began where Protea Road ended. Marikana Two consisted of five sections of 1400–1500 households each. Because I did not have access to old Marikana, I focused on the area within Marikana that was settled in the large July-August 2014 land invasion wave.

In presenting the data below, I generally did not differentiate between Rolihlahla Park and Marikana Two, because of the relatively small sample size. However, where possible, chi-square tests of difference were performed on the data to check for significant variation between Marikana Two and Rolihlahla Park. There was no discernable pattern of variation in the residents' characteristics or socio-political attitudes. Where relevant—particularly in residents' engagement with their committees—they are covered below.

### **Demographics of Marikana**

Data comparing Marikana to other geographical areas is shown below (Table 2-1), followed by a population pyramid for Marikana (Figure 2-3). Marikana residents are 20.2 years old on average ( $n=392$ ,  $SD=13.7$ ), and 43.7% are male. The 0-14 school-age group was much larger than the surrounding areas or Cape Town as a whole, comprising 40% of the

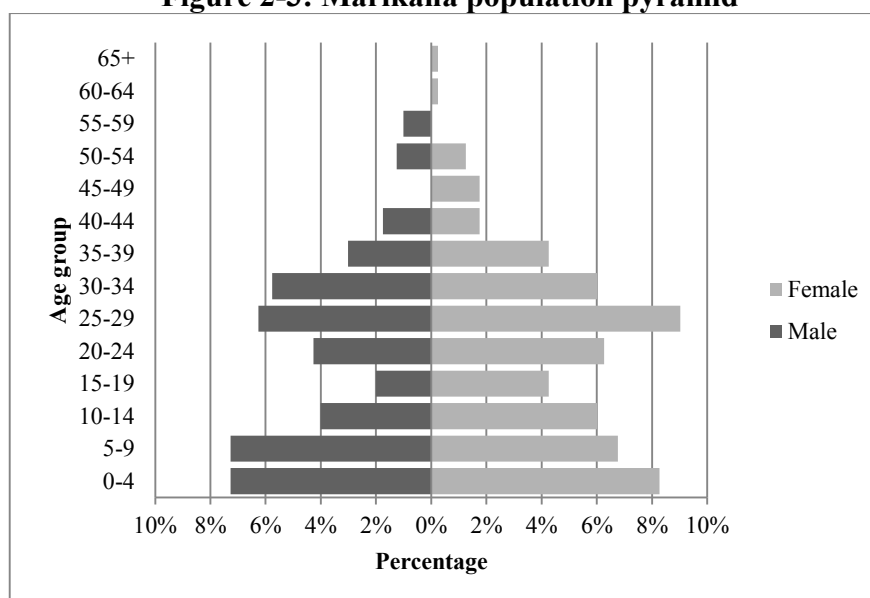
population. Contrary to claims of Marikana activists and residents, though, the age structure of adults (Table 2-1, row 3) was nearly identical to surrounding areas.

**Table 2-1: Demographic comparisons**

	Marikana	Ward 35	Philippi	Cape Town
% Male	43.9%	49.0%	50.2%	48.9%
<i>Age structure:</i>				
0-4	15.5%	12.9%	12.8%	9.9%
5-14	24.0%	16.7%	15.9%	14.9%
15-24	16.8%	20.8%	21%	18.4%
25-64	43.4%	48.3%	49.2%	51.3%
>65	0.3%	1.4%	1.2%	5.5%
<i>Age structure as % of above-15s:</i>				
15-24	27.8%	29.50%	29.41%	24.47%
25-64	71.8%	68.51%	68.91%	68.22%
>65	0.4%	1.99%	1.68%	7.31%
% Matric or higher	34.6%	33.6%	31.8%	46%
Labour absorption rate	37.6%	40.42%	41.87%	49.7%
Labour force participation rate	51.8%	63.6%	67.73%	65.29%
Unemployment rate	27.5%	36.46%	38.18%	23.88%
Household size	2.73	3.4	3.09	3.5

Data from City of Cape Town (2012; 2013a; 2013b).

**Figure 2-3: Marikana population pyramid**



At 43.7%, the male population was 5–6 percentage points lower in Marikana than in surrounding areas. This imbalance is puzzling. It is not a result of working men being away from home during the interview, since fieldworkers were told to probe for all members of the

household. Interview day variation does not account for this either, since the proportion is similarly low (44.5%) among Saturday interviews alone. One possible explanation is the higher number of female-headed households: 48% of all Marikana households, versus 39.4% nationally (Stats SA 2012). Among members of female-headed households, 34.3% were male, compared to 53.4% of members of male-headed households. Given small household sizes in Marikana, female-headed households are likely to have fewer adult men, which then lowers the male proportion of the population.

The average education level attained for residents above 18 years was 10 years<sup>8</sup> (n=217); 35% had completed matric. This is comparable to the figures for the surrounding areas (Table 2-1). The labour absorption rate<sup>9</sup> was 38%, lower than the other areas compared. The labour force participation rate was much lower, 52% (this may be attributable to the large number of youth and students in the population). The unemployment rate, excluding students, was 27.5%, which was between the Cape Town-wide rate and the unemployment rate in Philippi.

Though data on language and ethnicity were not systemically gathered, these were mentioned at the end of each survey session. Almost all the respondents were Xhosa-speakers, with the exception of one Coloured household and one Pedi (Northern Sotho) household.

Income data was not gathered, since many people had irregular income streams, relying on relatives and friends for help. However, a subset of the 2014 Living Standards Measure (LSM) inventory was administered (SAARF 2014). Measures with electricity and "in reality" are presented since many people stored electric stoves, fridges, and TV sets in their hokkies even though they lacked electricity. It was particularly inconvenient not to have fridges and electric kettles, because food spoilt faster and had to be bought in smaller

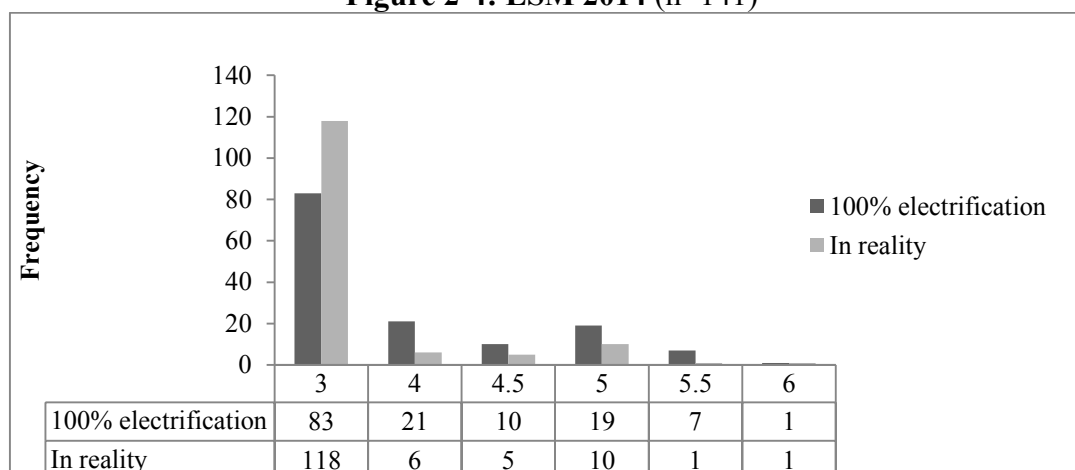
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<sup>8</sup> Technical diplomas were coded as 13 (n = 2) and tertiary education was top-coded as 14 (n = 9).

<sup>9</sup> The "labour absorption rate" (as defined by StatsSA) is the proportion of the working-age population that is employed. Unfortunately, employment data was not accurate because fieldworkers did not sufficiently distinguish between unemployed people (looking for work) and economically-inactive people (not looking for work), so the labour absorption rate is the most comparable with Census figures.

quantities (necessitating more grocery trips), and diarrhoea was a worry among parents of young children. Either way, most Marikana residents fell into LSM group 3 compared to 0.9% of the Western Cape population in June 2014 (SAARF n.d.).<sup>10</sup>

**Figure 2-4: LSM 2014 (n=141)**



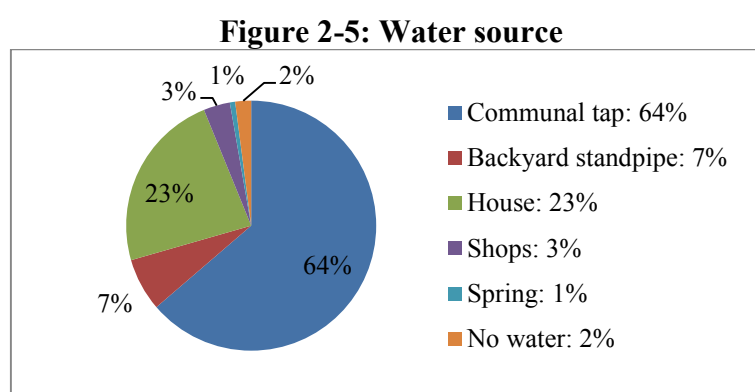
### Access to services

Having obtained housing, Marikana residents made it their priority to get access to water, toilet facilities, trash collection services, and electricity. Thanks to the formal and informal housing around Marikana, basic utilities were not completely inaccessible—but they were inconvenient. The median time to walk to the nearest tap was 25 minutes, not counting the length of time they had to wait at the taps (which could be as long as two hours). Some residents of the Lower Crossroads formal area, bordering Marikana to the south, charged Marikana residents R5 for a bucket of water, to charge their cell phones, or to use their bathroom facilities. Marikana residents could pay as much as R200 monthly for electricity from them.

80% of respondents went to the toilet in the open—either in the bushes, or at the graveyard behind Marikana's E-section (see Figure 2-2). This initially caused tensions with the Klipfontein community, for whom it was their burial ground. As time went by, the

<sup>10</sup> According to the formula used by SAARF, the lowest LSM possible in Cape Town was LSM3, since residence in an urban area and in the Western Cape are both computed to give a 'bonus' in the raw LSM calculation.

overriding concern over the graveyard became the rapes that took place there at night. A few built their own pit latrines<sup>11</sup> (a community effort is described in Chapter 4), and 17% used flush toilets at Lower Crossroads or at the shops along Stock Road. At night, people would use buckets and dump the waste in flush toilets or bury it in the morning. Most cooked with paraffin stoves (67%), producing noxious fumes in their homes; 21% cooked with gas, 9% electricity, and one respondent used wood. Most households (77%) lived without electricity because of the risk of fire.



Marikana residents with plumbing expertise built backyard standpipes, especially in the north area (Sections D and E) and along Protea Road, but I located none in the more densely built-up south area (Sections A, B, and C). People there tended to go to Lower Crossroads (formal housing) or communal self-built standpipes in the older informal settlements or Bhekela for water. In general, most households (64%) collected water from communal taps open to all, while 23% bought water from houses in Lower Crossroads, and 7% used standpipes in their own or their neighbours' backyards in Marikana. Backyard standpipes were mostly found in Sections D and E. One respondent in Section E reported using a spring under a tree; this raises concerns about water contamination from household waste disposal. On a 5-point scale from "never" to "always," 90% reported never paying for water. But those who did could pay R20 a day or R100–R360 for the month.

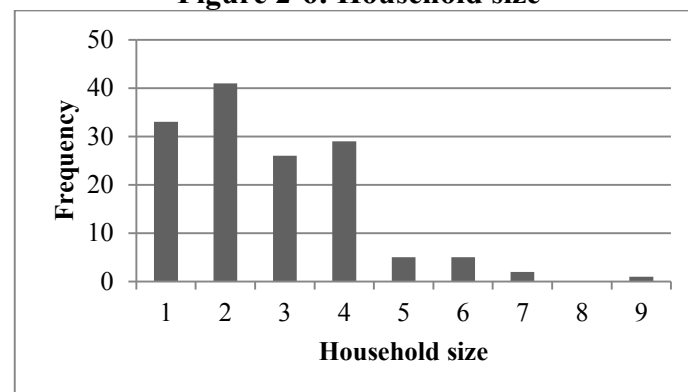
### Household size and structure

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<sup>11</sup> Outhouses

The average household size in Marikana is 2.73 ( $n=142$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ), lower than the figures for the City of Cape Town (3.5) and Philippi (3.09). Based on this household size and a figure of about 7756 households (7000 in Marikana Two, 500 in Rolihlahla Park, 256 in the original Marikana settlement), Marikana has a population of around 21,200.

**Figure 2-6: Household size**



Although data on household structure was not available from the 2011 Census, researchers have previously analysed 2001 and 1996 Census data. I adapted the classification used in Amoateng, Heaton, and Kalule-Sabiti (2007, 49), replacing the "non-related persons" category with a category of households that include both related and non-related persons. This reflects Marikana's residential character—non-related person households are associated with dormitories or hostels.

Single-person and single-parent households and nuclear families (Table 2-2, categories 1-4) are more prevalent in Marikana, while extended family types (5-8) are far less common. Single-parent households are only slightly more common than the nationwide figure in 1996; however, one-person households are much more common.

Half of the one-person households were single men; 72% of the single-parent households were headed by women. 48% of all Marikana households were female-headed, higher than the South African rate of 39.4%. Heads of household were 32.8 years old ( $n=131$ ,  $SD=9$ ) on average.



**Table 2-2: Family structures in South Africa and Marikana**

	(A) African households (1996)	(B) All households (1996)	(C) All households (2001)	(D) Marikana survey
(1) Single head of household	16.97%	16.2%	21.05%	24.8%
(2) Couple	7.14%	9.98%	39.86%	10.1%
(3) Couple + children (nuclear family)	19.75%	23.89%		25.5%
(4) Head + children only	14.53%	12.3%		16.8%
(5) Nuclear family + other relatives	7.20%	8.59%	35.86%	2%
(6) Head + children + other relatives	14.43%	0.5%		8.1%
(7) Head + other relatives	4.52%	2.82%		6.7%
(8) Couple + other relatives	-	-		2.0%
(9) Head + nonrelatives	2.10%	1.5%	3.25%	0
(10) Head + relatives + nonrelatives	-	-	-	1.3%
NR / declined / unspecified / missing	13.37%	23.72%	-	2.7%

NB: Column (B) was not subjected to recoding described in Ziehl (2001), so the unspecified category was far larger than column (A). Column (C) does not include nonresponse or unspecified. The best comparison is with Column (A). Sources: Columns (A) & (B): (Census '96, Ziehl 2001); Column (C): (Census 2001, Amoateng, Heaton, and Kalule-Sabiti 2007)

Amoateng, Heaton, and Kalule-Sabiti (2007, 50) have argued that extended family living situations are more common among the poor, because it enables them to pool resources. However, it appears that moving to Marikana was associated with smaller households, or household *fragmentation*. Singleton and single-parent households were disproportionately likely to have moved out of their family home relative to Marikana households in general—but not nuclear families.<sup>12</sup> This suggests that new informal settlements support new household formation for householders who would otherwise not be able to afford moving out of a family home. Although Amoateng et al.'s point is well-taken, resource pooling in the extended family happens even when family members are dispersed (see discussion in *Networks and information diffusion*).

<sup>12</sup> Odds ratios of having moved out from a family home were 1.25 for singletons and 1.08 for single-parent families (i.e., they were more likely than not to have moved out of their family home), compared to an odds ratio of 0.57 for the average Marikana household.

## **Vulnerable populations and social grant receipt**

Marikana was much younger than Cape Town or the surrounding areas. Very few survey participants were older than 45, and almost none was 65 or older. But 40% were under 15, which is much higher than Philippi (28.7%) or Cape Town (24.8%). 59% of all households lived with a person 18 or under, and the average number of under-19s in each of these households was 1.7 (n=81 households, SD=0.9). All but one of the under-18s in the households surveyed attended school; this child had a medical condition which kept her home.

A notable feature of Marikana residents' living arrangements was that 22% of households had children under 18 living away from their parents. Many of these children lived with their grandparents in Philippi, Khayelitsha or elsewhere, to be closer to school, or for safety. Other reasons were that the parents could not afford to take care of their children; that they were working and the children needed care; or that the parents were separated. One mother, who had lived in a formal house in Khayelitsha as a child, said she left her young daughter at her parents' family home, because "for her, I don't think it's fair, because my parents didn't do that to me [i.e., raise her in an informal settlement], so I don't think I should let her see the poverty. So I refuse to let her see that. She can only come here and visit, then she goes back" (6/2/2015).

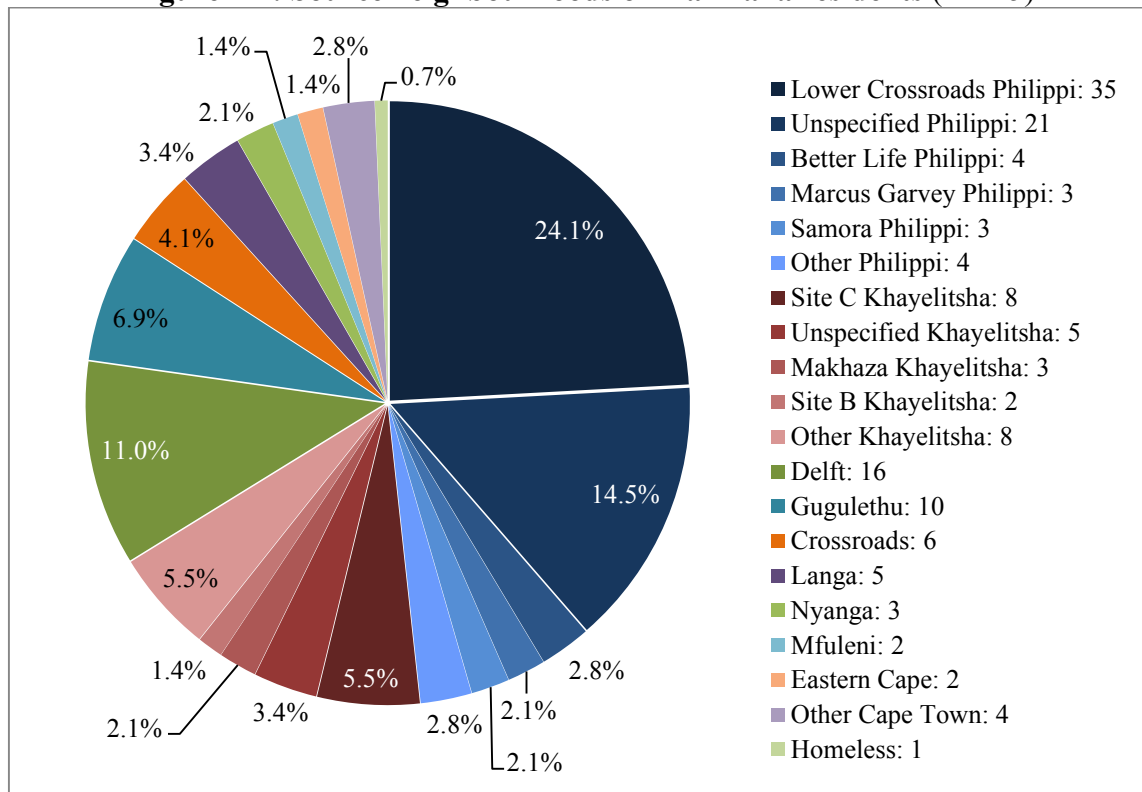
Relatively few people had disabilities (2.3%, n=392) or chronic medical conditions<sup>13</sup> (4.4%, n=388). Both of these are lower than the Western Cape rate—4.6% have disabilities, and the figure for hypertension alone in the Western Cape is 9.87% (Stats SA 2014). All in all, the dimensions of vulnerability in Marikana were skewed towards a younger, more able population—there were relatively more children and female-headed households, but fewer seniors and people with chronic health conditions or disabilities.

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<sup>13</sup> Since this was sensitive information, I did not gather data on precisely what health conditions they had

## Previous house

**Figure 2-7: Source neighbourhoods of Marikana residents (n=145)**



Studies of South African informal settlements have generally found that rather than being receivers of rural-urban migration flows, the overwhelming majority of residents in these settlements typically move there from other urban areas (Crankshaw and Hart 1990; Adler 1994; Guillaume and Houssay-Holzschuch 2002). This intra-urban flux suggests that informal settlements support choice in juggling different priorities: for instance, young workers may prize access to jobs over security of land tenure and availability of utilities; families with young children may put sanitary considerations first (Gilbert and Gugler 1982, 87; Perlman 1987).

As with other informal settlements, I found that nearly all of Marikana's residents came from within Cape Town itself (Figure 2-7), with under 2% of the sample coming straight to Marikana from elsewhere (two respondents from towns in the Eastern Cape). One neighbourhood alone in Philippi made up almost a quarter of Marikana, with Philippi as a whole contributing nearly half of Marikana's population. Khayelitsha contributed the next

largest contingent (18%), followed by Delft (11%) and Gugulethu (7%). Notably, only one out of the sample came from Mitchells Plain, a predominantly Coloured township.

**Table 2-3: Rent and type of house prior to Marikana**

	Family home, not paying rent	Family home, paying rent	Not family home, not paying rent	Not family home, paying rent	Total
RDP / formal housing	21	1	2	8	34
Informal house in backyard	17	0	3	61	81
Informal house not in backyard	12	0	9	5	27
Other	0	0	3	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>145</b>

Note: 3 respondents did not indicate what type of housing they came from or whether they paid rent; therefore the totals on the bottom row add up to 142.

Former backyarders constituted a slim majority (56%) of Marikana residents, of whom 42% were renters (Table 2-3). Out of the total sample, 53% were renters, while 35% had moved out of their family homes. This supports the dominant narrative among Marikana people, that they were "backyarders" who came to Marikana to "escape rents"—though certainly, many young people came to Marikana to start their own families or experience independence away from the family home (RP10 6/2/2015; pers. comm. 23/4/2015), while others left their previous housing to escape overcrowding or difficult domestic situations.

### **Coming to Marikana**

Though I analyse the Marikana land invasion as a collective action in the next chapter, it is necessary to ground that analysis in some facts about actions undertaken at the individual level. Below are three stories from Marikana settlers of the day they came to Marikana, followed by findings from the household survey.

#### *Personal accounts*

**ME4** (single man in 30s; separated from his partner, takes care of twin boys): It was a small group of Lower Crossroads backyarders that started the land invasion, but their small numbers made them vulnerable to eviction. This was followed by a lull, and then a huge

group 2-3 months later. Word just spread; he did not know of any planning in advance. Since he leaves to seek work early in the morning, he didn't notice the land invasion activity; it was only after three days that a neighbour told him it was taking place. "After three days my sister [*sisi*, a female friend] told me that, eh, people are moving to Marikana, so we are going to stay alone here, paying this rent each and every month. Let's try to find a way to move together with them." As a backyarder surviving on contract work, rent was a problem, so he took the opportunity to move. He was not sure when he moved in, but he remembers it was about three weeks before Ses'khona convened the meeting to elect a task team (22/8/2014).

When he eventually hired a bakkie to bring his building material over, the south section bordering Sheffield Road (sections A, B, C) was full, so he was the first to move to the north half of Marikana. The spot he picked was surrounded by bush, which he cleared on his own. But the others who came and settled around him were not from Lower Crossroads—they came from Delft, Khayelitsha, Mfuleni, and other areas. He only knew that they had problems paying rent, as he did.

**MB5** (single mother of four young children, in her late 30s): She was an unemployed backyarder in Brown's Farms, Philippi. On Saturday, 9 August 2014, an old friend living in Lower Crossroads, who knew she had trouble making rent every month, called to tell her that she had seen people invading land near her home: "I heard about it from a friend staying in Lower, she said that some people are making hokkies here. If you want, you can come, but you must bring your hokkie quick." She left immediately to scout the location. When she arrived, she found a plot to claim, and placed branches at the corners to mark it out. She stayed to guard her site for the rest of the day, making arrangements to borrow a friend's bakkie the next day to bring her hokkie over.

She came to Marikana on Sunday morning with her material, and, finding no law enforcement officers around, began to build. According to her, most people built their

shelters at night; if law enforcement had been around, she would have waited as well. Most of the people around her were young singles, or mothers or couples with young children. In these households, all of them moved to Marikana at the same time. She brought her three youngest children to live with her; the fourth was staying in Khayelitsha with her aunt (MB5's sister) to be nearer to school. The next day, law enforcement officers came around, but "they didn't talk to me, they just look around. They see I am staying here."

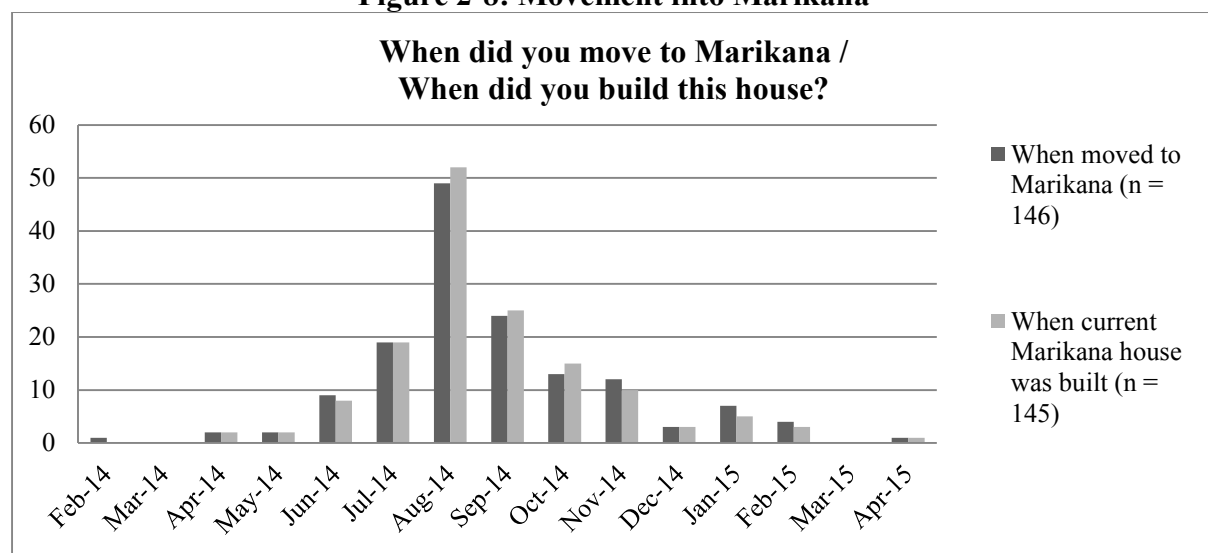
**MA1** (single man in his 60s; separated from his ex-wife): He was an elderly, unemployed community activist and street committee member, renting a backyard dwelling in Marcus Garvey, Philippi. Unfortunately it was his ex-wife's backyard, and he had had family quarrels with her and her children by her new partner. So his move was precipitated by a family conflict. He knew other people who had been involved in past land invasions around Lower Crossroads, and had heard rumours that they wanted to try again. He went past the Marikana area in early August, and found that people were building shelters on the land. But "the people they were so frightened to build their hokkies there on that place [Marikana], so I just told myself that I'm going nowhere, this place is right for me [...] I'm going to build my hokkie there. [...] Yeah, I decided on my own."

On Sunday, 10 August 2014, he phoned his ex-wife and asked if he could take the hokkie in her yard that he was staying in. She consented, and also agreed to go to Marikana to hold a spot for him while he disassembled the structure. He planned to arrive in Marikana to reassemble it at night, having had advice from other informal settlements that he should build at night—it was common sense that law enforcement would come during the day. So he hired a friend's bakkie, and they drove the material to Marikana at about half-past 8. He finished it just before 1 in the early morning, and slept in there the very same night. His was among the first hokkie in the area; people started arriving the next day, and it snowballed from there. This reassured him that they would not lose the land—there would be safety in numbers.

### Survey data

I asked Marikana residents when they moved to the area (n=146), and when their house was built (n=145). I found that nearly half of the sample moved to Marikana in July and August 2014, and 80% had moved there in the months July-November 2014 (Figure 2-8). The second question was intended to quantify the impact and disruption of eviction activity on Marikana residents. I expected that some might take time to raise money and buy more material, and I could use the length of time they took to measure the impact of eviction on their well-being. However, most respondents could not recall either date even with the prompts we used (asking whether it was the start, middle, or end of the month, and whether it was a weekend or weekday). Also, I found from personal accounts that many actually salvaged whatever material they could find on-site and rebuild their homes on the very same day, because afraid of losing their site, and had nowhere else to go. Therefore the distinction between the two dates was not useful.

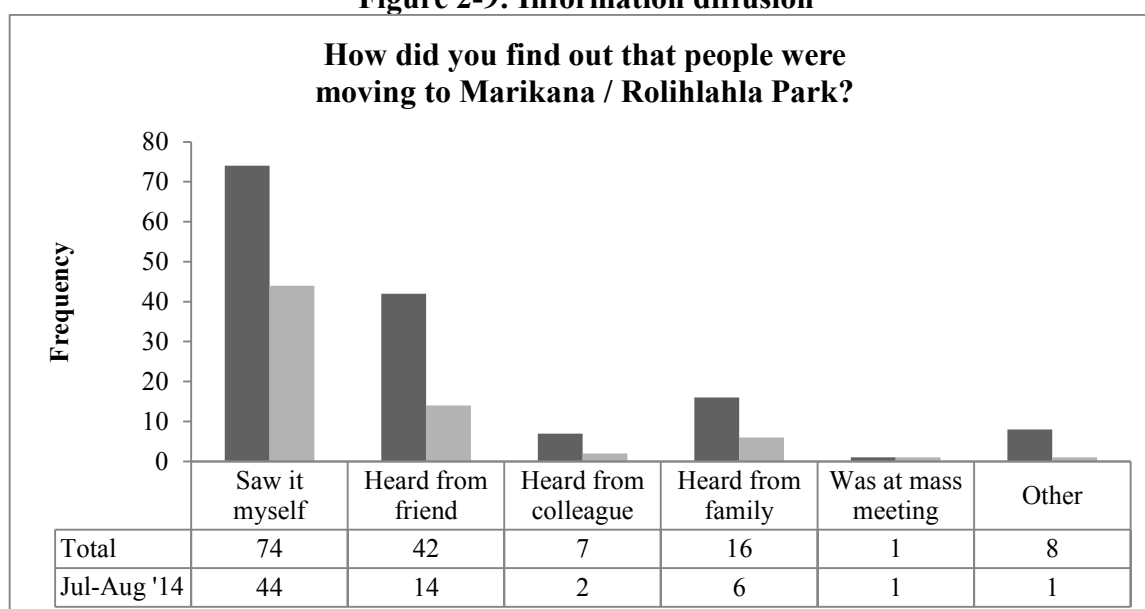
**Figure 2-8: Movement into Marikana**



Landowners claimed in court documents that "shack-farming" had taken place in Marikana. When asked, many residents protested that selling land was illegal, or explained that committee members had been exiled for it. Out of 143 answers, only 22 reported paying money for their plot. Sums ranged from R300–10,000, with 9 under R1000. I am sceptical of

claims higher than R1000—respondents might have misunderstood the question and instead reported how much they paid to buy a hokkie.<sup>14</sup> Some respondents might also have reported the sum they paid to have the land cleared and levelled.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, 9 out of 143, though still a significant proportion (6%), should be taken as an upper bound for the number of people who actually paid for their land. 5 out of these 9 were residents in the Old Committee's area (representing 12% of my sample from that area). This does suggest that the Committee might indeed have collected bribes. On the whole, the evidence suggests that shack-farming or bribery of committee members in Marikana did happen but was limited.

**Figure 2-9: Information diffusion**



NB: n=144 (total); n=66 (Jul-Aug 2014); more than 1 answer allowed

**Table 2-4: Information diffusion (continued)**

	Before you moved here, did you know anyone who was already staying here?		After you moved here, did you tell anyone else to come here?	
	Total (n=144)	Jul-Aug '14 (n=66)	Total (n = 141)	Jul-Aug '14 (n=67)
No	93 (65%)	48 (73%)	76 (54%)	35 (52%)
Friend	35 (24%)	10 (15%)	42 (30%)	20 (30%)
Colleague	2 (1%)	1 (2%)	2 (1%)	0
Family	14 (10%)	6 (9%)	31 (22%)	14 (21%)
Other	2 (1%)	1 (2%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)

Note: more than 1 answer allowed

<sup>14</sup> I understand that the typical rate is somewhere between R5000–8000, at least in nearby parts of Khayelitsha

<sup>15</sup> For instance, one respondent (2/5/2015) told me that she had paid R350 to engage help from someone the day she moved in, but insisted that it was for levelling the land, not to buy it. This was also reported by Warrant Officer Sibidla (pers. comm., 22/5/2015).



How the Marikana settlers came to know about the land invasion is important for the argument in Chapter 3, *Emergence*. If there were planning meetings or if community activists had tapped existing networks, this would be strong evidence that the land invasion was "organised." However, even though I did uncover evidence of a planning meeting in my interviews, only one of the survey respondents actually reported finding out about the land invasion via a meeting. Instead, most had found out about Marikana when they saw it for themselves (51%, n=144), or heard about it from a friend (29%; see Figure 2-9)—just like ME4 or MB5 above. Considering only the July-August 2014 land invasion wave, the proportion that had moved to Marikana after seeing it for themselves rose to 67%. 65% (n=144) did not know anybody in Marikana before they moved there, and considering only the main land invasion wave, this increased to 73%. In other words, they went without being told, and they knew nobody beforehand.

Just over half (54%, n=141) did not pass on the news of the Marikana land occupation. On the other hand, many others reported spreading the word to multiple people, telling their relatives, friends, and the backyarders they knew on their street.

For many settlers, the building of their hokkie was followed soon after by a visit from the Anti-Land Invasion Unit (ALIU). This was a traumatic experience for many: anecdotally, most were first-time land invaders and had no idea what to expect. The following emerged about the eviction operation: 58% of the settlers were visited by ALIU staff. A third of them were only visited once, and the median number of interactions was two. But sometimes, ALIU staff came when they were not at home—40% of those who reported no interactions with ALIU staff also said that their property was damaged during the eviction operation. In total, 65% of the residents reported damage or losses to their property from the ALIU operation. Only 11% of the sample were shown a court order. But because of the committees' efforts, about three-quarters knew about the court case by the time of the survey.

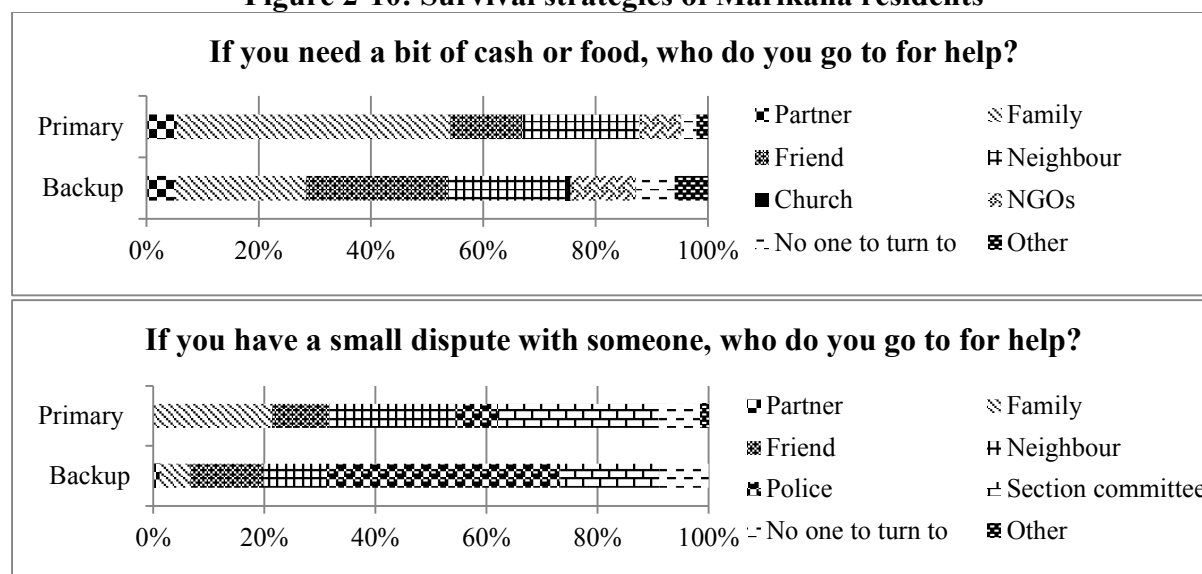
## Networks and information diffusion

Social capital, in its various guises, is an active field of research (Schuller, Baron, and Field 2000; Serra 2011). Without taking sides on the definitional wars over social capital (Portes 1998; Sobel 2002), I opted to capture aspects of social capital using questions on networks and trust (Jooste 2005). Research in South Africa has shown that networks are associated with greater success in obtaining employment (Adato, Carter, and May 2006; Godlonton and Burns 2006); membership in associations like rotating credit unions is also correlated with higher household welfare (Maluccio, Haddad, and May 2000). However, the association between group membership and health is mixed, with some groups associated with higher HIV risk (Campbell, Williams, and Gilgen 2002; Pronyk et al. 2008). Jealousy, which could be conceptualised as a negative interaction between networks and norms, acts as a powerful disincentive to entrepreneurship (Adato, Carter, and May 2006, 243; Cichello et al. 2011). While it might have been too soon to see social capital manifest its role in macro-level welfare effects in Marikana, it was possible to document the level of perceived trust and security in Marikana. As security is a major concern in a new informal settlement, high levels of interpersonal trust may (if nothing else) act as a cognitive cushion against stress.

Mattes, Bratton and Davids (2002, 60) have operationalised social capital as *survival strategies*, reasoning that for many marginalised people in Southern Africa, tapping on social networks and resources is a matter of day-to-day survival. They asked people to specify their primary and 'backup' method for obtaining food, cash, healthcare, or keeping their homes safe. I did not ask the full spectrum of questions they did, because in exploratory interviews, interviewees became discomfited by having to specify just how dependent they were on others. However, primary and secondary sources of assistance for survival and dispute resolution are shown above (Figure 2-10). Family is the primary source of help for survival, followed by friends and neighbours; most people also choose one of these three as their

backup options. People most often go to the section committees for dispute resolution, but not far behind is neighbours and family. The police are by far the most important backup option for dispute resolution, but they are not trusted as the primary option for two main reasons: they are perceived to be biased against residents of informal settlements, and there is a widespread belief that police do not enter or investigate crimes in Marikana.

**Figure 2-10: Survival strategies of Marikana residents**

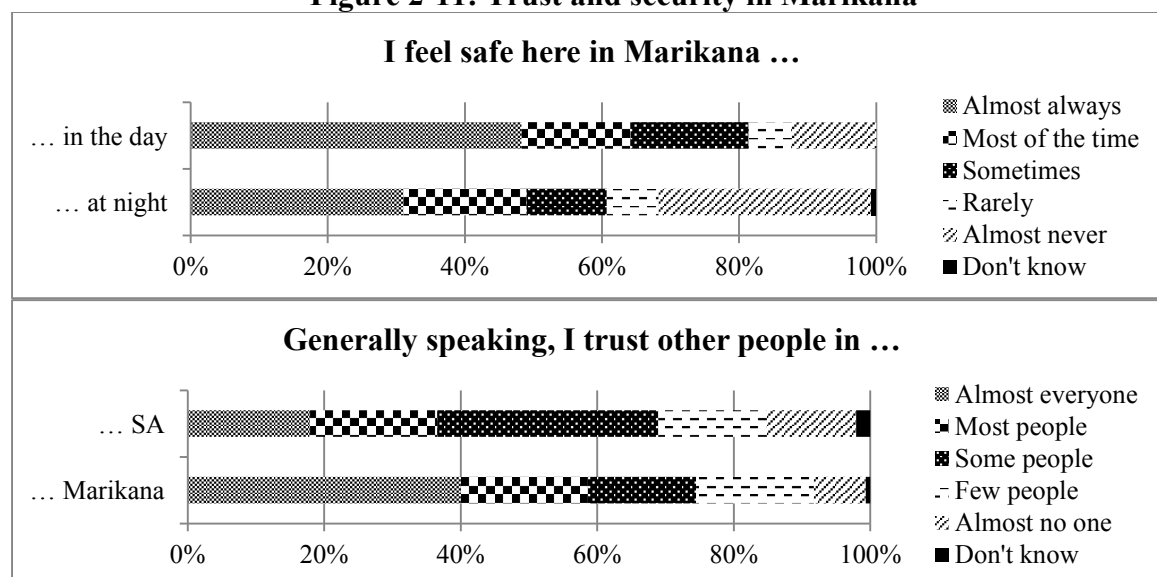


I measured trust and security with two five-point scales (Figure 2-11). Nearly two-thirds feel safe "most of the time" or better during the day, but this drops to just under half at night, suggesting that Marikana still has some way to go. I adapted the trust item to avoid the pitfall of the generalised trust question in the World Values Survey,<sup>16</sup> which as Jooste (2005, 8–9) points out forces a choice between non-mutually exclusive options. I therefore offered respondents a 5-point categorical scale, which is less confusing but incommensurate with existing trust measures. The proportion of "distrustful" people is fairly stable whether they are asked to consider Marikana residents or South Africans in general. But the proportion of respondents that trusts "almost everyone" jumps twenty percentage points when changing the frame of reference from South Africa to Marikana, and there is an equal shift of people who

<sup>16</sup> It offers the binary choice, "Generally speaking would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful when dealing with people?"

trust only "some people" in South Africa but "most people" in Marikana (Figure 2-11). Open-ended responses suggested that for most people, trust was cultivated through an effortful process of daily face-to-face interaction giving and receiving small favours from neighbours. The quantitative data suggests that contact has helped to reduce distrust significantly even in the few months they have lived together.

**Figure 2-11: Trust and security in Marikana**



Lastly, in conjunction with two questions on attitudes to foreigners, I asked a subset of the survey participants if they would help a neighbour in an emergency, and if they would do something if they saw a skollie (petty criminal) stealing from a shop in Marikana. The neighbour and shopkeeper were left unmarked in these two questions, to give a notional baseline against which I could compare attitudes to *foreign* neighbours and shopkeepers. Full results are reported below (see section, *Xenophobia*) but 96% agreed or strongly agreed that they would help a neighbour, and 89% would help a shopkeeper. If taken at face value, this suggests a strongly proactive community.

## Organising in Marikana

Chapter 4 covers the development of institutions of informal governance in Marikana: the section committees as well as the Marikana Development Forum. These functioned as

centres of associational and organisational life in the settlement, fighting crime, settling disputes, providing informal order, and lobbying externals for resources. I tried to measure the depth and health of ties between committees and their constituents.

Most ordinary residents have a positive relationship with their committee. Attendance at mass meetings was good: measured on a scale of 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always), 79% (n=144) self-reported that they attended at least "sometimes" (the mid-point of the scale). Most recognised someone in the committee: only 23% (n=142) did not know at least a committee member, 46% recognised either a committee member or the chairperson himself, and 30% knew at least one committee member by name. This suggests remarkably good name-recognition given that the ratio of committee members to households was about 1:28 in Rolihlahla, and theoretically around 1:100 in Marikana Two.<sup>17</sup> I consider *name*-recognition to be an indicator of a stronger bond than *face*-recognition, since many committee members became recognised simply by patrolling Marikana and announcing mass meetings, without substantive interaction. Of course it could cut both ways—a much-maligned committee member might also be well-known by name—but in practice this was not likely since the committees' approval ratings were quite high. Most respondents (77%, n=133) thought that their committee was helping them, 9% disagreed, and 14% did not know.

On the other hand, some anecdotally reported poor communication between them and committee members, mainly because they were working and could not attend meetings. 73% of residents surveyed said they would not want to be committee members themselves. Among the reasons they gave were employment (i.e., they had or were looking for a job), their own personality traits ("I'm not talkative"; "I have no patience for people"), or challenges that committee members faced ("Residents are rude to committee members"; "it's unsafe to be a committee member"). While conducting the survey, fieldworkers found two residents who

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<sup>17</sup> At the committees' full strength, which was never achieved in Marikana Two

reported that they were "afraid" of their committee (pers. comm. 25/4/2015, 2/5/2015). When pressed for the reason, both told anecdotes of how committee members' houses had been burnt for disagreeing with top committee members: these people had been too "political" or spoke their minds too freely. Unfortunately they refused a follow-up interview, so no more details could be obtained.

The patterns of approval ratings of the Marikana Two and Rolihlahla committees was not significantly different, as a chi-squared test of significance of group differences gave a p-value of 0.37. Neither was residents' depth of their ties with their respective committee chairpersons (p-value=0.8) or committee members (p-value=0.4). However, it seems that Rolihlahla Park (RP) residents attended committee meetings rather less than Marikana Two (M2) residents, with a chi-square test of difference on the 5-point scale giving a p-value of 0.049, barely significant at the 5% level. Only 17% of Marikana Two residents reported attending meetings "rarely" or "never," compared to 30% of Rolihlahla residents. This suggests that engagement between committee and community was weaker in the Rolihlahla side. As we will see in Chapter 4, there were indeed other tensions between the Rolihlahla committee and its residents.

### **Socio-political attitudes**

Lastly, I measured socio-political attitudes on three areas of interest: the relevance of gender on leadership, xenophobia, and the level of engagement with "invited" spaces of participation vis-à-vis more disruptive tactics. In general, their attitudes to gender and foreigners were more in line with equality than the literature would lead us to expect; and while they had more faith in participation (whether through voting or protest) than the general population, they were also more inclined to trust the courts to protect their rights than to support direct action.

#### *Gender*

Historically, street committees tended to be gender-segregated (Cole 1987, chap. 2; Burman and Schärf 1990); even in the early 2000s, it was thought that there were separate "men's issues" and "women's issues" (Lee and Seekings 2002). To explore this, I used both survey data and interviews with committee members. The general Marikana population was divided on the issue of gender in leadership, but leaned towards gender equality rather than male leadership. In a choice between "men are better leaders" and "men and women should have the same chance of being elected to lead," the survey data shows that 66% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the gender-equal position. That said, this is lower than the 72% support for the same choice in the countrywide Afrobarometer wave 5 (2011-2013) survey. A few respondents expressed the view that men are more effective as community leaders in new informal settlements because others are more likely to listen to them (pers. comm. 18/4/2015).

Marikana leaders asserted that gender is not an issue in their work. Leader after leader expressed the view that both genders were equal, and that they aspired towards a gender balance among their membership. An elder leader explained that "as time goes on, now everything is democratic"; a woman could be a chairperson or lead the disciplinary committee if the community thought she was suitable (MA1 19/3/2015). Rolihlahla's acting chairperson expressed similar sentiments: "we want those who are vocal, who have technical ideas, honest, understanding the law. Not whether they are man or woman" (RP2 20/3/2015). From Jan-Apr 2015, MDF1, a mother of two, served as the acting MDF chairperson. In her experience,

*When I am chairing the public meeting, they don't judge me as a woman. Even the men are there they are listening to me. And when I have a question, when they give me a question and then I answer them, no one said, "no, oh, oh you are the woman you can't know everything." They give me that respect.— interview 19/3/2015*

My own limited observations (three committee meetings) suggested that both men and women contributed freely and roughly equally in discussions (28/4/2015, 16/5/2015).

Nevertheless, in practice there was a gender imbalance in committee membership. Because of personal responsibilities, some women ended up dropping out of leadership (MDF3 21/5/2015). This may mean that as the burden of care for households tends to fall on women (compounded by the fact that more Marikana households are female-headed), women are more likely than men to shed the extra burden of community leadership—more work is needed to confirm this hypothesis.<sup>18</sup> From what I could tell the committees were slightly male-dominated, particularly the senior leadership. But this was impossible to verify systematically due to constant change in committee membership. From the residents' and leaders' opinions, the gender imbalance did not appear to be by design. The evidence suggests that the practice of gender equality in grassroots governance structures, while not perfect, has improved substantively from the past.

### *Xenophobia*

Xenophobia in South African townships is a national concern, and has been widely studied (Misago, Landau, and Monson 2009; Kirshner 2012; Hayem 2013; Monson 2015). From Feb 24–26—two weeks before I had planned to begin the survey, and before the anti-foreigner violence across Gauteng and Durban in April 2015—Somali shops in Lower Crossroads were targeted for looting and arson (Knoetze 2015). I therefore added questions about attitudes towards foreigners and xenophobic behaviours to the survey instrument. Below, I describe what I was able to gather about the causes of the violence and the local leadership's response to it. I then present what I found about ordinary residents' attitudes towards foreigners through the survey.

Violence against foreigners around Marikana was sparked by a road incident outside the Bellville Magistrate's Court on Tuesday, 24/2/2014, where Ses'khona leaders were to be sentenced for their part in the "poo protests" at the airport in 2013. A Somali-owned goods

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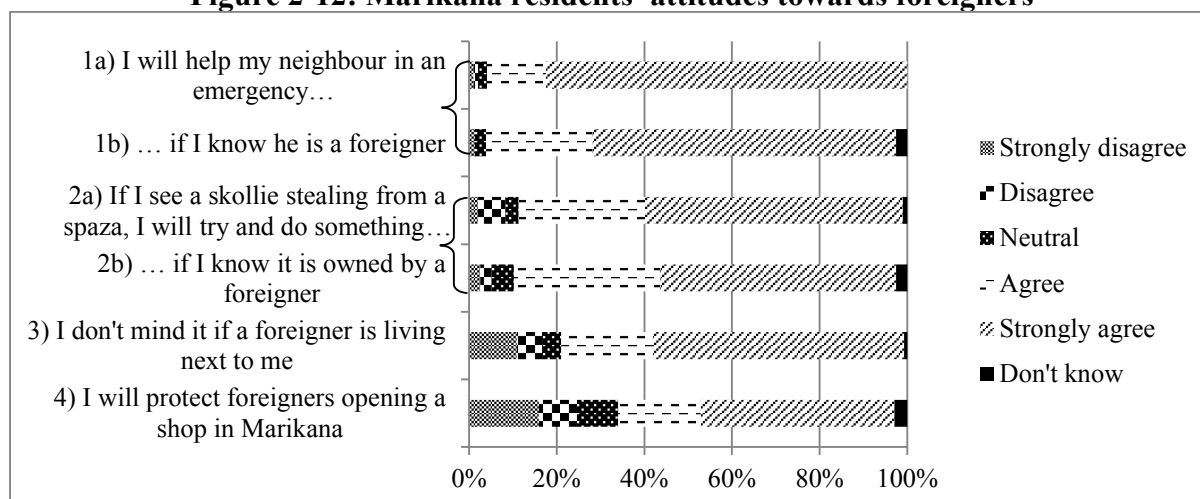
<sup>18</sup> This argument has also been made by an interviewee quoted in Miraftab (2006, 202) concerning the WCAEC: "it is always women that have to put food on the table."



vehicle accidentally drove into a crowd of Ses'khona supporters as they were returning home from the courthouse. The crowd, angered, looted some shops in Bellville. This was taken back to Sheffield Road on the south edge of Marikana, where Somali-owned spaza shops facing Marikana were targeted for opportunistic looting. Local leaders like the chairperson of Marikana's section B called the police and attempted unsuccessfully to stop the looting (MB1 18/4/2015). On Wednesday, at a crisis meeting held in the Philippi East community hall between the Somali business association in Philippi, Ses'khona and Marikana leaders, and the ward councillor, the Somali side offered to pay for the schoolgirl's burial in the Eastern Cape, and took Ses'khona's suggestion to remain closed for three days (they had already closed on Tuesday). MDF leadership immediately announced this to Marikana residents at the meeting field. According to the section E chairperson at that time, "they didn't have any problem with that. They said [the Somali shopkeepers] must carry on. Then we'll protect them, the Somalis" (19/3/2015). Shops reopened as normal by Friday 27/2/2015.

Unfortunately, I was not on scene when the looting broke out, and this research did not have the benefit of immediacy, unlike previous attempts like Sinwell (2009). Nevertheless, a randomised survey sample might be more representative of Marikana residents' attitudes. Therefore, I added several attitudinal questions to my questionnaire to address these questions. The results show that Marikana residents are no more likely than the general South African population to join in on attacks against foreign neighbours and shopkeepers; neither do they express significantly different willingness to help foreigners in their midst compared to South Africans. Extended responses condemning xenophobia were widespread and sincere—I believe that the vast majority of respondents were not self-censoring. This supports the position taken by leaders in the media, that the violence was small-scale opportunism, rather than xenophobic in nature (Knoetze 2015).

**Figure 2-12: Marikana residents' attitudes towards foreigners**



For the first item—reported as 1a/b—the interviewees were split and approximately half the sample was asked to respond to the first statement in the pair, "I will help my neighbour in an emergency," while the other half was asked to respond to the statement "I will help my neighbour in an emergency *if I know he is a foreigner*." This design was repeated for items 2a/b, asking whether interviewees would react to a thief. Chi-square tests of independence on each of those pairs showed that neither treatment was significant ( $p = 0.3$ ,  $p = 0.7$ ). In other words, there was no evidence that the average Marikana resident would treat foreign neighbours or shopkeepers differently from locals.

**Table 2-5: Afrobarometer results**

	Very likely	Likely	Not very likely	Not likely at all	Don't know
<i>How likely is it that you would take part in action to prevent people who have come here from other countries in Africa from ...</i>					
<i>... moving into your neighbourhood?</i>	12.4%	19.9%	32.2%	33.7%	1.8%
<i>... operating a business in your area?</i>	15.7%	19.7%	28.5%	34.2%	1.9%

Source: Afrobarometer 2011

Items 3 and 4 were adapted from the 2011 Afrobarometer questions, "How likely is it that you would take part in action to prevent people who have come here from other countries in Africa from moving into your neighbourhood / operating a business in your area?" Unfortunately, due to a translation error in item 4, "prevent" was rendered as "protect." Also, to save time and aid comprehension, the options were changed from a 4-point likely/unlikely

scale to a 5-point agree/disagree scale. This makes the results incompatible with the Afrobarometer findings. But given that the Afrobarometer survey asked people to admit to an undesirable behaviour (attempting to stop immigrants from moving in or operating businesses nearby), I consider it likely that the Afrobarometer result underestimates the willingness to participate in anti-foreigner behaviour. Just one-sixth of Marikana residents would object to a foreign neighbour, against 78% who would not. If we (reasonably) assume that only those who object to foreign neighbours would actually act against them, then the willingness to act is at most 17%, against roughly 32% found in the general South African population. 63% would protect foreigners opening shops in Marikana, against 25% who would not.<sup>19</sup> Again, it seems fair to assume that only those who would not protect foreign shopkeepers in Marikana would act against them, which suggests that by either measure, Marikana residents are at least as tolerant as the general South African population.

What did ordinary residents really think? One resident gave me this memorable quote:

*Even if you're a foreigner, you must be happy here. Even the ants and flies must be happy!*  
— 25/4/2015

Although whimsical, this was not too far from the general sentiment. Many residents I spoke to expressed regret at the targeting of foreigners. Most commonly, interviewees would say that foreigners were "also human," that they "need to survive, like me," or that "we're all in life for making a living"—they expressed **solidarity**. Almost as common was the idea that South Africans **benefited** from foreigners, particularly foreign shopkeepers: "they are here to help us." Many cited instances where Somali shopkeepers would sell items on credit or simply give bread, while others pointed out that they usually had lower prices. One said that locals could learn entrepreneurship from foreign shopkeepers. Next, some blamed locals for having **poor or mistaken attitudes**, describing compatriots as "lazy" or "dumb," not having the drive or skills to improve their own situation. Lastly, a few cited **reciprocity**. One said

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<sup>19</sup> A few respondents were taken aback at the idea of "protecting" foreigners, but this certainly does not mean they would have joined in an attack on a foreign-owned shop.

that it was a fair exchange: "we have our money; they have their things to sell." Another worried that foreign countries would cut off electricity to South Africa, and a third resident said, pragmatically, that he might end up working in Namibia one day.

Of course, some residents also expressed anti-foreigner sentiments. Two interviewees associated Nigerians living in townships with "corruption" and drugs, with one saying that Nigerian women were fine, but not men. A few also believed that foreigners were competing unfairly against them for jobs or business, by accepting lower wages or not paying tax. Lastly, one claimed that they would not have recourse against a foreign criminal because "I don't know where we're going to find them if they're doing something wrong." However, a clear majority of both the responses were sympathetic.

Mosselson (2010) and Hayem (2013) have argued that public discourse in South Africa has moved towards a populist interpretation of rights and entitlements as *stratified* by citizenship, and away from the *universalist* ideals espoused in the Constitution. Therefore, I also probed for the level of agreement with a universalist versus a stratified idea of rights and entitlements. The quantitative data shows a 59-36 split in favour of universal rights for all living in the country (see Table 2-6). While speaking to residents, I asked them to give reasons for their choice. A few had heard the Charterist principle "South Africa belongs to all who live in it" at political rallies or knew that leaders in the anti-apartheid struggle had referenced it. For those who had never heard of it, a common response was **reciprocity**: they believed that South Africans overseas needed to have their rights respected, so foreigners in South Africa should also be protected. Or, they explained that **historically** other African countries had helped South Africa during the anti-apartheid struggle—which was after all a struggle for rights. A few expressed **solidaristic or universalist** principles: "we stay together, we have to fight together," or "I would like to accommodate everyone who's from the outside world."

**Table 2-6: Support for universalist or exclusionary entitlement**

	Agree	Strongly agree
<i>South Africa should belong to all who live in it</i>	13 (9%)	69 (50%)
<i>In South Africa, rights should be for locals, not foreigners</i>	7 (5%)	43 (31%)
Neither	4 (3%)	
Don't know	1 (1%)	

NB: interviewees were asked to choose the statement which corresponded most closely to their view, and state how strongly they agreed with it. No response = 12.

Most of those who were in favour of exclusivity believed that the limited resources of the state should go towards supporting locals first. One objected to the word "belong," saying that "for foreigners, they can come here to work and do business, but not to take the country." Yet these responses were not in the majority. Mosselson (2010, 649) has argued that the trigger for South Africa's anti-foreigner attacks is not just deprivation, but "deprivation... framed in the language of belonging"; yet here in a relatively deprived settlement a clear majority still accepted that South Africa's resources belong to all, *including* foreigners. It is clear that while these scholars are correct in diagnosing the rise of an exclusionary citizenship discourse, further evidence must be gathered as to the *prevalence* of such a discourse relative to an inclusive, liberal view.

#### *Participation and protest*

Last, I present evidence on residents' attitudes towards state institutions and protest. It is clear that a large segment of Marikana accepts the legitimacy of democratic institutions, electoral politics, and the courts—but they also consider protests useful in getting what they want. Booysen (2007) argues that there is a "dual repertoire" of protest and voting in the articulation of service delivery demands; this was confirmed in the case of Marikana. I first present findings on favourability towards the two modes of claim-making, voting and protest; I then follow with perceptions towards the law and courts in protecting their rights.

The act of voting was very important to Marikana residents. Turnout for the 2014 national election was 89% among the survey respondents, far higher than the 76.4% turnout in Cape Town as a whole (News24 n.d.). 91% said they would vote in the next election, while

3% were not voting and 6% were uncertain. It must be emphasised that these figures were obtained by surveying Marikana homeowners (and substitutes only if the owners were not available), rather than all adults in the settlement. It is therefore not directly comparable with the general population. Nevertheless, the remarkably high figures show that Marikana is by no means a collective actor that has resorted to protest because it has given up on electoral politics.

On the other hand, most people (81%) told the survey team that they had not met or seen their ward councillor, and 41% thought he was not helping them (38% didn't know; 22% thought he was helping). Anecdotally, the most common response was that there was no ward councillor because Marikana was new (recorded as "don't know"). Some thought he was helping, but "slowly," accepting that councillors had limited power and resources. A few thought he did help, for instance helping residents obtain temporary shelters from the city's Disaster Management unit after several destructive electrical fires. But the plurality thought he was unhelpful, citing their lack of services, or even blamed them for empty promises. It seems that their enthusiasm for electoral politics is not being met from the top down.

The survey found two pieces of evidence for the coexistence of conventional and disruptive tactics: the confirmation that a "dual repertoire" of protest and voting (Booyesen 2007) enjoys broad support in Marikana, and the relatively high level of support for the courts as protectors of rights. In a nationwide survey, Booyesen found that 52% of respondents thought protest would help to get better services; 54% thought voting would help. The corresponding figures from Marikana were 69% and 65% (Figure 2-7). While support for protest is slightly higher, the difference between these is not statistically significant given the sample size of the survey. Moreover, 47% of respondents supported *both* protest and voting for service delivery. This confirms, as Booyesen argued, that there exists a "dual repertoire" of conventional and disruptive participation in service delivery demands.

**Table 2-7: Attitudes towards voting and protest**

		<i>Voting in a local government election will help us get services from the City</i>							
		SD	D	N	A	SA	DK	NR	Total
<i>Protesting against the City is an effective way to get better services</i>	SD	1	0	1	3	8	0	0	13
	D	2	5	0	3	3	0	0	13
	N	1	0	2	3	1	0	0	7
	A	3	2	3	15	8	2	0	33
	SA	6	3	3	12	30	8	0	62
	DK	0	0	2	0	3	4	0	9
	NR	0	0	0	1	0	0	11	12
	Total	13	10	11	37	53	14	11	149

NB: Figures reported are numbers of respondents. SD = strongly disagree; D = disagree; N = neutral; A = agree; SA = strongly agree; DK = don't know; NR = no response recorded. Shaded area (agree that *both* voting and protesting will help to get services) recorded 47% support.

*If we toyi-toyi, we don't know if they will help or not, but we still do it so people know that we need help*  
 – 2/5/2015

Open-ended responses from several residents nuanced this picture, showing that protest filled a void—representation—that most people thought electoral politics ought to fulfil in an ideal world. Many people said that voting had not helped despite them having participated for years. Politicians were widely derided as people who only showed up around elections offering empty promises. A respondent thoughtfully offered that voting *should* help, but in practice protesting was more effective. Protests helped marginalised voices get on the government's agenda: "if you're quiet you cannot get services"; "it's just to push them, hurry them up." Respondents generally conceptualised the target of protests as the government rather than the public—"protest must be direct. So you go to a person who's development, or somebody you voted for." That said, many criticised protesters for "messing up their own environment," or said that negotiating was preferable to "fighting." People treated protest as a way to voice problems, a substitute to engagement and negotiation when that had failed; but disapproval was grounded in its disruptive and violent nature. These were by no means insurrectionary or revolutionary attitudes.

I also assessed Marikana residents' support for the judiciary and the legal process. Having gone through a formative conflict with the Anti-Land Invasion Unit, which then led

to a court battle over their right to the land, people may have come to associate the courts with the trauma of evictions. I also expected that having taken the law into their own hands by invading land, they would support "self-help" or direct action tactics (i.e., "making our own rights real"). So I asked respondents to side with one of two statements on who they could rely on to protect their *rights*: the courts, or themselves. The results were unexpected. Slightly more preferred the legal route (49%) to standing up for their own rights (44%); "neithers" and "don't knows" made up 7% (Table 2-8). Although both sides are close, the fact that nearly half of the respondents would put their faith in the courts *despite knowing the illegal beginnings of their informal settlement* is remarkable. In other words, nearly half of the respondents rejected the direct action option in favour of legal routes to defend their rights—in spite of the fact that they themselves had engaged in housing rights-related direct action.

**Table 2-8: Who protects rights?**

	Agree	Strongly agree
<i>We can depend on the courts to protect our rights</i>	21 (13%)	46 (34%)
<i>We are the ones who make our own rights real</i>	12 (9%)	48 (35%)
Neither	7 (5%)	
Don't know	3 (2%)	

NB: interviewees were asked to choose the statement which corresponded most closely to their view, and state how strongly they agreed with it. No response = 12.

Those who favoured direct action for rights mostly said that they could not depend on anyone else to defend them, and pointed to the example of the land invasion itself. On the other side, a common response was that they were powerless without the backing of the courts: "we can't rule the courts, we're supposed to support [them]." This could be interpreted as *disempowerment*: if the court ruled against them, they would have to leave. But another angle would emphasise the *legitimacy* accorded to the courts: "we have to support them." This is consistent with the legitimacy accorded to the courts' decisions. Several Marikana residents told me, independently, that they had to abide by two court-imposed restrictions in order to keep the land—that there must be no new structures, and no extensions of existing



structures (MDF3, 16/5/2015; pers. comm. 24/4/2015). In practice, as Marikana grew more secure it became a polite fiction that no new structures were being built, but the leaders at least paid lip service to these conditions.

It is also strange that "making our own rights real" did not receive more support given that it is a common talking point of the Ses'khona People's Rights Movement. This might be associated with the fact that Ses'khona was a polarising organisation. Those who approved of it tended to emphasise that they had helped bring lawyers in and organise the settlement (by initiating the committees), while laughing off their "poo protests"—in other words, putting more weight on the lawful, orderly aspects of their activities. But those who disapproved generally characterised them as disorderly—their enumeration of the hokkies was messy and confusing (pers. comm. 15/4/2015) and their poo-throwing tactics "like animals" (pers. comm. 26/11/2014, 6/4/2015). So the relatively low approval for what might be considered the Ses'khona position on rights is consistent with a desire for order and support for lawful protest tactics.<sup>20</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The typical Marikana resident is younger and more likely to be able-bodied and female than the national or metropolitan population. She is comparably educated to grade 10, but less likely to be employed. Households are smaller and more of them (nearly half) are female-headed; two-thirds are nuclear families, singletons, or single-parent households. Nearly a quarter of all households have a child who is living away from their parents in Marikana, usually for safety or proximity to school.

She suffers from poor access to services—the median households is 25 minutes' walk from the nearest water source; most use paraffin stoves to cook, suffer the indignity of going

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<sup>20</sup> This also holds even if we take Rolihlahla residents, who did not benefit from Ses'khona's presence, out of the analysis. Though 62% of residents in Marikana Two believed Ses'khona was helping them, 28% said they were not sure (10% no; question not asked in Rolihlahla by request of their committee); yet the percentage who supported direct action on rights was 47%, versus 49% who trusted the courts to protect their rights.

to the toilet in the open, and have no electricity. She is not a rural migrant; nearly all of her neighbours moved from within Cape Town. She left an expensive rental situation; others, an overcrowded family home.

Most of her neighbours came between July and November 2014. As for herself, she is most likely to have seen it in progress on her way to work. Like two-thirds of her neighbours, she knew no one else in Marikana before she came, and she told no one else about the land invasion after she came: thinking, perhaps, that it was too big a risk of eviction, and she could not be responsible if others lost their property too.<sup>21</sup> According to her, there was no planning beforehand, and no leader during the land invasion.

When the law enforcement officers came, she had no idea what to expect. Pointing to her children, she begged them to overlook her: "where else must I go?" If her house was destroyed, chances are she was never told why or on whose authority. Yet (as documented in Chapter 3) she likely did not resist. She and her neighbours rebuilt their houses as soon as they could.

Like most of her neighbours, the typical Marikana resident goes to mass meetings sometimes, maybe every other week. She recognises a few faces of committee members but is hard-pressed to put a name to any of them. The committee has been of help to her community—but she wouldn't want to be a member herself. She's too shy to talk to people, she insists, and anyway she's looking for work.

She supports having equal numbers of women on committees, and treats foreigners little different from locals (though some are more cautious of foreigners). "We all need to survive" is a typical sentiment. The average Marikana resident leans conservative (rather than disruptive) in her political orientation, generally trusting democratic institutions and the courts, and voting in elections (with a higher turnout than Cape Town). She voted last year

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<sup>21</sup> MC2 pers. comm., 13/2/2015

(2014) and will do it again, although she is ambivalent about local politics. Change comes slowly, she accepts, and protest (the alternative to conventional politics) is a messy business. But in practice, community frustrations boil over and she thinks participating in a march will help—if not directly, at least to remind politicians of their problems. Nevertheless, she has faith that the courts will protect them.

The typical Marikana resident feels safe in Marikana, though less so at night. Though her initial instinct, like most others, was to be cautious, she has built up trust with her neighbours through repeated daily interactions. She says she will try to help a neighbour or local shopkeeper in an emergency. She gets by with help from friends and family, and increasingly her neighbours, and takes disputes to the committee in charge of her area; the police are at best a backup.

This thumbnail sketch sets up important puzzles: if the typical Marikana settler saw the invasion already taking place, how did it start out? How did the committees, so important for resolving disputes, arise? And what are they doing to improve the lives of their constituents? I address these in the next two chapters, *Emergence*, and *Organising*.

### Chapter 3 Emergence: The founding of Marikana

*And well, we don't know how that one happened, because the... seemingly, the manner in which people poured in that particular area... one was suspicious that it seems as if it's something that was organised somewhere*

– Councillor Mpondwana, interview, 8/5/2015

Marikana informal settlement, in Philippi East, Cape Town, began in March and April 2013, when people from surrounding areas started to move onto what was then a vacant piece of land, reportedly a hotbed for vice and crime. These early settlers were followed by a far larger wave that began moving onto land adjoining the first settlement in July and August 2014. An estimated 5500 structures were built in August on 49 hectares of land. As seen in Chapter 2, they came mostly (56%) from hokkies in the backyards of landlords living in formal housing—"backyarders," for short. Another one-third of them had moved out from family homes. Both times, the municipal Anti-Land Invasion Unit (ALIU) organised large-scale operations together with the South African Police Services (SAPS) and other municipal law enforcement agencies to try to prevent them from settling on the land. The settlers in turn elected committees to organise their defence in their legal fight to stay on the land; these committees eventually took on roles of informal governance, and began to engage the City for recognition in various respects (the subject of Chapter 4).

While housing informality in cities of the global South is a complex phenomenon, taxonomies of housing informality generally distinguish between slow "encroachments" and rapid land "invasions" (Gilbert and Gugler 1982, 89; Rogerson 1989; Durand-Lasserve and Royston 2002, 4–5). As Mabin (1989, 23) asserts, "land invasions do not arise spontaneously: they require social organisation and planning." The conventional wisdom is that land invasions are swift, and a prerequisite of speed is organisation. In the literature, "organisation" usually exhibits characteristics such as a clearly identifiable leader (often a local priest or activist), the surveying of plots, or the involvement of named, formally-

constituted social movement organisations (Peattie 1990; Cuenya et al. 1990; Paley 2001, 45; Holston 2008, 171). Holston (2008, 171) contrasts two Sao Paulo squatter settlements: in one, the *Movimento Sem Terra* (MST, a social movement organisation) organised a land invasion, in which 84 families moved onto a disused site in two days, marking plots and building standard houses of concrete block with technical assistance from MST; in the second, families gradually moved onto the land over several years, without coordinating between themselves. Encroachments are slow and unorganised, as in the second example. They coalesce around a nucleus as families drift in, and often have the acquiescence of the landlord (Crankshaw, Heron, and Hart 1992; Crankshaw 1993). These different models of informal settlement formation presume different causal mechanisms.

The Marikana land invasion was certainly swift (see Table 3-1), so encroachment was not an appropriate conceptual model. But this—and the assertions of politicians, officials, and the media (as illustrated by the quote above)—invited questions on the nature of organisation actually involved in Marikana. I found that the land invasion was planned, but on the initiative of individuals in the area rather than by any established organisation. Most of the "organisation" (such as there was) was by word of mouth. Indeed, 73% of the land invaders during July and August did not know anyone in Marikana beforehand, while two-thirds of them joined Marikana because they personally saw the invasion in progress. Therefore, the central puzzle that this chapter addresses is, if the Marikana land invasion happened so fast, what sort of "organisation" enabled it? This chapter lays out the evidence.

I begin with a survey of relevant concepts from social movement studies that will ground the analysis of the Marikana land invasion as a collective action. I then describe the history of land invasions directly related to the July-August 2014 land invasion, as well as the eviction operations conducted against the invaders. Between March–April 2013 and July–August 2014, the political opportunity structure had shifted in favour of land invaders (law

enforcement agencies have become less willing and able to crack down against them). But this only explains land invasion *success*, not land invasion *occurrence*—unless would-be land invaders *themselves* knew about the change. They did not. For a fuller explanation, I turn to an analysis of the land invasion as an episode of collective action. While political opportunity structure and resource mobilisation were both important factors, I find that there is a cognitive frame (Snow et al. 1986; Benford and Snow 2000) that facilitates land invasion. Lastly, I borrow Bayat's (1997a, 16) concept of "passive networks" to account for how that shared frame enabled the collective action that birthed Marikana.

### **Theories of social movements and collective action**

The analysis of social movements has developed iteratively by identifying omissions and inaccuracies in past work. Schools of analysis have formed, concentrating on resource mobilisation, identity, and political processes. A broad consensus has emerged around the importance of these three factors (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 1997), though this consensus is not without criticism (e.g., Flacks 2003).

The first major myth that social movement theory (SMT) grappled with was that crowd behaviour was inspired by a collective mania, chiefly driven by objective *deprivation* and subjective *frustration*, and culminating in *aggression*: the "deprivation-frustration-aggression hypothesis" (McPhail 1991, xxi). In the US, this was systematically disproved by quantitative studies—by most measures, cities that experienced violence differed little from calm cities, and rioters' circumstances and attitudes were not distinguishable from those of non-rioters (ibid.; McCarthy and Zald 1977, 1214). This meant that neither deprivation nor frustration were tenable explanations for collective action. At best, they might be necessary, but not sufficient.

In response to this problem, McCarthy and Zald (1977) made three moves. They posited that any society could have enough grievance and discontent to support mobilisation.

Polletta (2008) observes that this effectively turned grievance into a constant term that could be set aside in favour of examining other factors affecting movement success. Two, they drew on rational choice theories which applied economistic assumptions to sociological phenomena. Olson (1965; McCarthy and Zald 1977, 1216) provided the puzzle to be solved: why do individuals take on private costs in order to deliver collective goods? And three, perhaps influenced by the emergence of "professional social movements" in the US (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996b, 3–4), they focused on organisation, reasoning that collective action requires the marshalling of collective resources, which in turn requires some sort of organisation. With that, McCarthy and Zald articulated their theory of *resource mobilisation*. In this perspective, organisational structure is both a resource in itself and a means by which further resources (individuals' time and effort) are brought into service (Clemens and Minkoff 2004).

The resource mobilisation paradigm and its focus on organisations soon became the dominant framework by which social movements were analysed (Tarrow 2011, 24; Clemens and Minkoff 2004, 156–57). Nevertheless, its focus on organisation ignored emerging social movements which did not organise formally (Tarrow 2011, 24 citing Evans and Boyte 1992, McAdam 1999). Social movements and SMOs could be conflated only at risk of serious conceptual problems regarding the presence of organisational structures (Porta and Diani 2006, 25). Moreover, there was the opposing view, that formal organisation *hindered* effective mobilisation (Clemens and Minkoff 2004, 155; Piven and Cloward 1979, xv; Piven and Cloward 1991). In studying "poor people's movements," such as the 1930s unemployed workers' movement and the civil rights movement in the US, Piven and Cloward (1979) concluded that it was *disruption* rather than organising that won concessions from elites.

Attempts to deal with RM's shortcomings led to two new schools of thought. One reintegrated the role of ideas and interests in mobilisation, which had been neglected in the

resource mobilisation framework (Snow et al. 1986; Gamson 1992). Snow et al. (1986) argue that *frames*, or informational schemes and hierarchies that guide action and give meaning to one's experience, are crucial to mobilisation. Social movements engage strategically in "frame alignment," closing the gap between an individual's and the social movements' frames, in order to motivate participants to act collectively (ibid.). Closely related is the idea of collective identity, which Stoecker (1995) referred to as a "universe of frames," governing the relationship between problems and solutions or action. Identity answers the question "how do we organise" (Clemens 1996, 209).

Collective identity has implications for mobilisation. Bayat (1997a; 1997b; 2007) has added to the conceptual toolkit with the concept of passive networks, which are "the instantaneous communication among atomised individuals which is established by the tacit recognition of their common identity and is mediated through space" (Bayat 1997a, 16). Subaltern groups, he argues, may mobilise not just through deliberate, *active* organisation, but also *passively*. For instance, informal traders, squatters, or women in contemporary Islamic societies who defy public dress codes can recognise the commonality of their interests and act collectively and spontaneously against a threat of state repression. Passive networks are what enables *atomised* individuals to nevertheless constitute themselves as a collective actor (Bayat 1997a, 19). He also points to the importance of public streets and squares: short of explicit organisation (whether in formal associations or informal networks), *space* becomes the medium in which collective action emerges. Although he has not made the link explicit, the idea of passive networks contributes to the framing paradigm by specifying a mechanism through which frames are reified into action.<sup>22</sup>

The difficulty in studying framing, ideation, and identity-making is that they are often transitory and ill-defined, which makes them hard to measure (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald

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<sup>22</sup> The idea of "cognitive liberation" (McAdam 1985, 48–49)—that movement participants need to be of a certain frame of mind to see an opportunity for what it is, and seize it—is similar, but Bayat additionally emphasises the role of space in making collective action possible.



1996b, 6). They may also require the adoption of a social constructivist paradigm to adequately capture evidence of creation or shifts in frames. Moreover, identity, framing, or what Polletta terms 'culture' is often treated merely as a residual variable, explaining what structure cannot account for; it is a challenge for the field to overcome this conceptualisation of framing (Polletta 2008).

The other response to deficiencies in RM was political process theory, which emerged out of comparative studies of social movements. Spatial and temporal variation in the way movements organise and strategize seemed best explained by differences in the *political opportunity structure*, or the channels through which a challenging group could press claims on the elite (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996b, 2–3; D. S. Meyer 2004, 127). Social movement or unconventional political activity is shaped by conventional politics. Tilly—in an approach that synthesised sociology and history (Tarrow 1996)—applied this perspective to data on contentious political actions in Britain and France over centuries. This generated two key insights. Social movements are a product of the *political opportunities* found in the modern state, which favour large-scale contention and disruption of national-level politics (Tilly 1979). Separately, the *repertoire of contention*—the "limited set of routines that are learned, shared, and acted out through a relatively deliberate process of choice" (Tilly 1995, 41–42)—had adapted from being "parochial, bifurcate, and particular," (i.e., delineated in scope) to "cosmopolitan, modular, and autonomous" (national in breadth, *ibid.*, 45–46). Thus the repertoire of contention evidenced a transformation in the nature of the state. The "repertoire" analogy (*ibid.*, 42–43) has been adopted to conceptualise other things as well, such as the choice of organisational form (Clemens 1996). It is one of the ways by which culture (in the sense of commonly-held ideas and expectations rooted in historical context) has been re-integrated into social movement studies (Tarrow 1996, 592).

Social movement theory has progressed as counterexamples have been found to question the assumptions of previous paradigms of analysis. But a set of factors that is inadequate for one case study could be perfectly adequate for another. Unlike hypotheses, analytic frameworks are not 'disproved' by counterexamples. Moreover, the use of different levels of analysis (social movement, social movement organisation, and tactic) has fragmented studies of collective action. Recent work has instead come to treat these two issues as opportunities for synthesis (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996b; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 1997; Tarrow 2011). It is widely accepted now that collective action and social movements may be analysed using a combination of the *political opportunities* (and their limits) created by state institutions and other actors; *mobilising structures*, or the organisational hierarchies and social networks that enable resources to be marshalled in service of collective aims; and the strategic creation or *framing* of symbols, ideas, and identities which motivate collective action.

### **A chronology of Marikana**

Rolihlahla Park was settled in the first week of August 2014, on a portion of Erf 149, Philippi East. Their committee was elected in a mass meeting on open ground alongside Protea Road on 18/8/2014 (RP2 20/3/2015). Marikana Two was formed after that, by newcomers spilling over into adjoining properties. As they confronted the Anti-Land Invasion Unit and other law enforcement agencies, they sought help from Ses'khona People's Rights Movement. Ses'khona leaders negotiated with law enforcement agencies to stop their eviction operation on 22/8/2014, and convened a mass meeting to elect a **Marikana Task Team** later the same day. This was reconstituted as the **Marikana Development Forum** (MDF) at the end of October 2014. Erf 145 in the north part of Marikana, owned by Power Construction Ltd., became the base for the **Old Committee** (a name applied by MDF members). Marikana Task Team attempted to bring the Old Committee under its leadership,

but they were unwilling. The Old Committee was eventually expelled by residents in the area in December 2014.

**Table 3-1: Timeline of the development of Marikana**

Dates	Events
Nov 2012	<b>Mthawelanga</b> (Xhosa, "bright light of the sun") land invasion founded in Philippi East (see Figure 2-2); destroyed by law enforcement twice in three days. Settlers disperse.
Mar – Apr 2013	<b>Marikana first wave:</b> Land invasion by about 150 people on Mrs. Fischer's property (erf 150-RE, Philippi East); three attempts to settle the land, last of which aided by Abahlali baseMjondolo. Ongoing eviction operation. Marikana name chosen, reflecting the perception of state persecution in the face of rights claims.
May 2013 – Jan 2014	Encroachment on Erf 150-RE of about one structure per week according to the municipality; constant eviction operations brings Marikana down to as few as four settlers at times.
Jan 2014	About 30-50 people attempt to join the 20-odd houses in the Marikana land occupation at the start of the year; driven away by law enforcement. Interim interdict granted in the Western Cape High Court (WCHC) on 10/1/2014 against new settlement on the property. <sup>23</sup>
24/7/2014	<b>Marikana second wave:</b> Mass meeting organised on Marikana land by a team of 3–5 from the first land invasion. Plan announced for a new land invasion to commence at the beginning of the next month (August 2014), when people have money after their social grants or salaries are paid out.
2/8/2014	Second Marikana land invasion begins with a small group of around 10; municipal Anti-Land Invasion Unit begins monitoring the site on 3/8/2014. According to court documents, the progress of the land invasion was: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunday 3/8/2014: 10 structures</li> <li>• Monday 4/8/2014: 25 structures</li> <li>• Friday 8/8/2014: 69 structures (enumerated by a sheriff of the WCHC)</li> <li>• Saturday 9/9/2014: 100 additional structures (estimated)</li> <li>• 10–15/8/2014: 200 additional structures per day (estimated)</li> <li>• Monday 18/8/2014: 1500 structures in total (estimated)</li> </ul>
10/8/2014	Eviction operation against Marikana commences. Operations undertaken on 11/8, 13/8, 14/8, and 22/8; and 5/9 against Rolihlahla Park (settlers on Erf 149). Ongoing private security operations run by owner of Erf 145, at the north edge of Marikana.
16/8/2014	"Old Committee" elected
18/8/2014	Rolihlahla Park committee elected
22/8/2014	Ses'khona leaders arrive in Marikana and intervene to stop the eviction operation. Marikana task team elected

Sources: Sacks (2013a), Sims (22/4/2015), court documents in *Iris Arillda Fischer and the City of Cape Town v Persons whose identities are to the applicants unknown and who have attempted or are threatening to unlawfully occupy Erf 150 (Remaining Extent), Philippi; and Others*. Western Cape High Court Case no. 297/2014, various interviews

<sup>23</sup> *Fischer and another v Persons unknown and others*, Western Cape High Court case no. 297/2014.

## **An antecedent in Mthawelanga: November 2012**

Mthawelanga was a small land invasion in Lower Crossroads, between the formal houses in Luzuko and Lower Crossroads. MDF2 was the only source for this, though Siyabulela also suggested that a land invasion associated with Marikana took place in October 2012. At that time, MDF2 was staying in the family home in nearby Lower Crossroads with her mother, sisters, and two young children, but she was hoping to move out for space and privacy; a family conflict was the last straw. According to her, she had heard youngsters talking about needing houses:

*It was a meeting, like, guys, I'm sick and tired of sleeping in [my] mum's house, and, me too, so let's go, guys, and get our own ground. It's the teenagers [who] decided, they wanted to have freedom*  
– 18/6/2015

She therefore decided to look for a piece of vacant land and convene a mass meeting there. Her long-time involvement in street committees meant that she was known in the area, so this helped her to mobilise people in the area. At the meeting, residents discussed the need for housing; they resolved to occupy the vacant land the very same night. Those who joined the land invasion were mostly young people, but single men, women, and couples were all involved. (Older people tend not to get involved at the start "because they're scared they can't run.") They chose the name in hope of raising many children ("bright lights") there.

Her boyfriend had a hokkie which he moved from the backyard he was staying in. Since they could not afford a bakkie, he dismantled the structure, piled it flat, and four people carried it on their heads to the site. Others piled their material on a trolley [shopping cart] and had their friends wheel the cart to the site, one person on each side. "we toyi-toyed through the streets with our hokkies. And then we're waiting [for dark]. It was during the day we had the meeting" (pers. comm. 18/6/2015). After bringing their material to the site, they began to build the structures. On the second day, the 'cops' (ALIU officers) took her hokkie away. Defying them, she salvaged material from the area and built a second house. That was broken

down on the third day, after which the land occupiers dispersed and left the area, going back to the backyards.

Mthawelanga lasted a mere three days in November 2012. Several weeks later, in late December, the would-be land invaders delivered a memorandum to the ward councillor demanding land for housing—which was fruitless. But according to MDF2, some of the people involved in that land occupation went on to found Marikana, and then Marikana Two. In other words, this established the land occupation within the "culturally available" repertoire of collective action.

### **The first founding of Marikana: April 2013**

On 27 April 2013, Freedom Day, Abahlali baseMjondolo, a Durban-based social movement organisation, released a press statement on their website and Facebook page, announcing the founding of "Marikana: A New Land Occupation" (Abahlali baseMjondolo 2013). The date was the anniversary of the first democratic elections in South Africa. Pointedly, however, Abahlali referred to it as *UnFreedom Day*, inverting the official discourse. In fact, according to an activist then living in Marikana, people started coming in to the Marikana land "slowly, not in large numbers" in March 2013 (A1 28/10/2014). Abahlali only got involved in the land occupation after land invasion attempts had twice been suppressed by law enforcement agencies in the weeks before. Another antecedent, Mthawelanga (see previous section), had also been suppressed by the ALIU (MDF2, 13/3/2015). MC4, who came up with the Marikana name, explained that having already gone through two eviction operations, the new settlers saw parallels between the state repression the Marikana miners had suffered, and their own repression under law enforcement agencies (MC4 7/5/2015). In both cases, marginalised people who had been struggling to get their rights recognised were shot at instead. They therefore decided to adopt the Marikana name because of this association.

The land invasion that was to become Marikana began with mass meetings among backyarders living in Lower Crossroads. MC4 reported that the first meeting was announced through a Facebook post (7/5/2015). Unfortunately she could not recall how or where she came across the original post, but she remembers thinking it was a "smart" idea, and showed up despite not knowing the originator of the message personally. She responded to the message at the appointed time and date, together with a small group of about 20 others, but according to her they concluded "it could have been a joke" because the person who called the meeting did not show up until the third day of discussions. She had never participated in housing activism or community leadership before, but went simply because she thought it was a "great idea."

In any case, at least one planning meeting took place. The content of the discussions included common grievances—both general conditions such as joblessness, unaffordable rents, poor landlord-backyarder relationships, as well as area-specific problems (A1 28/10/2014). One of these problems was that crime had been reported on the unoccupied, unfenced, unnamed field where Marikana now stands. Reportedly, rapes and abortions took place on the land, and murder victims and stolen cars were regularly found there. It was suggested that that land should be occupied to deny criminals the space to operate (Bhejula 25/5/2015), and also in order to draw out the owner(s) of the land and force them to do something about it (A1 28/10/2014). It would also serve the needs of backyarders suffering high rents or unemployment. Land occupation was thus a multivalent tactic that fulfilled several functions simultaneously.

On the first attempt to settle the Marikana land, sometime in March 2013, residents built their houses at night. A collaborative atmosphere prevailed: people helped each other level land and build houses, and chipped in money to buy material and hire bakkies. Fires were lit at night so that the building activity could continue (Bhejula 25/5/2015). However,

law enforcement officers took these structures down in the morning (A1 28/10/2015; MC4 14/5/2015). On the second attempt, law enforcement came after five days (MC4 14/5/2015). In desperation, they contacted Abahlali activists for help, having gotten their contacts from a journalist from the New Age newspaper who had been reporting on the ongoing evictions (MC4 14/5/2015). On their third attempt, Marikana residents—150 of whom had paid R10 for Abahlali membership—and several Abahlali activists began to construct new homes on Friday 26/4/2013. Six were completed on the first day, and 15 on the second (Saturday, 27/4/2013, or UnFreedom Day). The ALIU began to take down structures on Sunday 28/4/2013, and their "preventative actions" lasted until Wednesday 1/5/2013.

#### *The 28/4/2013 – 1/5/2013 eviction operation*

The City of Cape Town's Anti-Land Invasion Unit, or ALIU, is a law enforcement agency under the municipal Human Settlements Directorate. ALIU officers patrol the municipality, driving around and watching for new settlement activity. Once an alleged land invasion is identified, ALIU officers check a GIS system for details of the relevant landowner (Sims 22/4/2015). The municipality deals with land invasions on public land under the common-law doctrine of *counter-spoliation*,<sup>24</sup> dismantling structures they consider unoccupied. They simultaneously apply for a court order—an interdict against future settlers who might arrive, preventing them from settling on the land and authorising actions to stop them. In the case of private land, the ALIU contacts landowners and advises them of the land invasion and what they can do to seek legal redress. Once a court order authorising eviction or interdicting new settlement is obtained (usually the latter first, while the former is contested), an ALIU operation commences.

ALIU coordinates with the SAPS, Metro Police, other relevant City departments, and the demolition contractors. Field officers identify the structures to be taken down or kept

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<sup>24</sup> Counter-spoliation is used to justify an action taken by a property-owner to immediately take back property that has been taken from them (spoliated). But de Vos (2013) has argued that the Prevention of Illegal Eviction Act of 1998 and subsequent court judgments limit the possible use of counter-spoliation against land invaders.

intact, by spray-painting markings onto the exterior. ALIU staff, private contractors and (according to residents) prison labour physically demolish and remove the structures. Backup from the SAPS public order police unit (a provincial-level unit) and the local police station is sought if there is a threat of violence. According to Lt Col Nel, Head of Visible Policing at Philippi East SAPS, public order police (who are trained in crowd control) are in the "inner perimeter" of the operation, while local police form the "outer perimeter" (22/5/2015). They protect the contractors and ALIU officers from stone-throwing and other physical violence.

On the first day of evictions, 28/4/2013, law enforcement agencies arrived in the area at about 9am and set up a base in the vicinity of Luzuko, less than five minutes' drive from Marikana. According to A1, they claimed that they did not need any court authorisation to proceed with the operation. Officers in riot gear formed a perimeter around the houses to be demolished, while workers went in and began to take them down. While people were initially acquiescent, giving up in the face of overwhelming force, A1 and another resident began to physically resist members of law enforcement and public order police. Both were arrested. This fighting (A1 was the first to begin resisting) then sparked off communal resistance: residents began rounding on the law enforcement officers and throwing stones. According to A1, this was spontaneous, rather than organised, but it was triggered by his example. While the police withdrew, bringing the two arrested persons with them, Marikana residents began to burn government vehicles and barricade roads along the way to the police station; they assembled outside the police station demanding the release of the two residents. Eventually a lawyer secured their release on bail that night. Building went on: A1 reports that there were 300 hokkies when he left, but 400 when he returned that night. According to the ALIU, they stopped about 200 structures from being built over the four days of the operation (Nortje 2014).

*After the eviction*



Given that under South African law, evictions can only take place if authorised by a court, Marikana settlers prepared for a legal battle. They nominated several members among themselves to seek legal representation (Bhejula 25/5/2015). But otherwise, Marikana settled into a period of dormancy. A few houses remained, but of the 60–80 residents who stayed in Marikana, most of them began to sleep in tents that they dismantled during the day to avoid detection (A1 28/10/2014; Sacks 2013b). Abahlali donated tents, food, blankets, and cooking supplies (A1 28/10/2014), and offered to organise meetings with the ward councillor and the mayor regarding their right to stay on the land, but neither of these materialised—the councillor allegedly refused to meet with them, and the subcouncil never replied to them (Bhejula 25/5/2015). Homes continued to be built (though not on a concerted scale) and torn down, and at one point only four people remained on the land in tents. Even the chairperson of the Marikana committee did not stay on the land (ibid.). Moreover, some Klipfontein residents attacked them, burning their structures because, according to them, they were squatting on "land that belongs to them and their forefathers" (ibid.). Displaced Marikana residents made do by moving in with relatives and friends, or returning to rented backyard hokkies.

### **The second founding of Marikana: August 2014**

People drifted in and out of the Marikana site, occasionally harassed by law enforcement. By the end of winter, 2014, there were about 54 households left in Marikana (MC4 7/5/2015). Several of those who had been part of the original Marikana settlers decided to re-start the occupation (ibid.).<sup>25</sup> In late July, a small group of about 3–5 Marikana ex-residents borrowed loudhailers from community leaders in a nearby informal settlement.

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<sup>25</sup> From 2/6/2014, the City's Human Settlements Directorate was aware of renewed attempts to settle on Marikana, but it is unclear how many people this involved (Sims 22/4/2015); from the perspective of the occupiers, some also report returning to the land in June (Bhejula 25/5/2015). According to two leaders in what later became Rolihlahla Park, they were among a group of less than ten who were the first to settle in this new wave, but they claim to have arrived in August 2014, not June (RP2, RP9). In the chaos of constant construction and demolition; there might have been earlier groups that they did not know about.

They then went round other informal settlements and formal areas in Philippi with large populations of backyarders—Lower Crossroads, Lloyd, Better Life, Marcus Garvey—announcing a mass meeting to be held on 24/7/2014, at the open field next to Bhekela TRA (MC4 14/5/2015). "Marikana" was still not well-known then, so the organisers referred to the site as "the field by Goal" (a local supermarket).

At the meeting, the same grievances were aired as the meetings in 2013: general issues of jobs, rent, poor relations with landlords, as well as the specific issue of crime on that land (RP1, RP2, MC4). Again, the Marikana site was selected because "we decided to stop those problems of robberies by using it" (RP6). The attendees<sup>26</sup> decided that the land occupation would commence on at the start of August, when people would have their wages and social grants (MC4 14/5/2015). There was a second meeting on Friday 2/8/2014, after which the settlers began to build at 8pm (RP6, 26/11/2015). At the same time, rumours and even some misinformation began to spread—one of the rumours was that the land was owned by the owner of Goal supermarket itself, and he had granted permission for the land to be settled (MA2 14/5/2015; Sibidla 22/5/2015).

The settlers in this wave first came to the old Marikana area. However, people there told them that a court case against them was already in progress, so newcomers could not join the old Marikana site (RP6 26/11/2014, MDF3 14/5/2015). Instead, the new residents spread out first to the west of the old Marikana area (later known as "Rolihlahla Park") in the first week of August, filled the section of Marikana between Sheffield Road and Protea Road up to Bhekela TRA (now "Marikana Two," Sections A, B, and C), and finally the area between Protea Road and the workshops on Lansdowne Road (now Marikana Two, Sections D and E). The progress of the land invasion is documented in Table 3-1. Law enforcement officers

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<sup>26</sup> It was claimed that over 2000 people attended that meeting (MC4 14/5/2015). This is probably an exaggeration (I discuss this below, in the section *Why did Marikana happen? Other contributing factors*).

numbered structures X1 – X69 on Friday 8/8/2014 (RP6 26/11/2014). By the end of August, around 5500 structures were built (Sims 22/4/2015).

Several individuals claimed to have come to Marikana entirely on their own without having heard about it from anyone *or* seen land invasion activity happening. In other words, they claimed to be pioneers. For instance, RP9 was a homeless taxi driver who slept in his vehicle wherever he parked for the night. He claimed to have been one of the first seven to have settled in Marikana in July-August 2014.<sup>27</sup> He later became a member of a section committee in Marikana, though he had never served on a committee before, and was entirely unaware of any mass meetings held previously to discuss the invasion of the land. On the other hand, most residents I spoke to either said that there were rumours flying around between neighbours, friends, family, and colleagues that a land invasion was imminent, or that they had seen it in progress (see Chapter 2, *Personal accounts*). Only a handful of my informants mentioned the planning meetings.

Whether they came alone or in a wave, this land invasion was also a collaborative effort just like the first Marikana invasion attempt:

MC4: *At that time we were helping each other. If you bring the hokkie, there, and you don't have people to help you, we are helping you to build up the hokkie. Then the others are cleaning inside, they're putting in your furniture, then we're going to another, to the next one, that's what you did then. [...] We were helping each other out on that day. If you have your material, but you don't have money, then you're asking people, let's put our five rands, then we should hire a bakkie to go and take the material, then the material is here, people are helping each other. That's how we did it.*  
– 14/5/2015

But there was little leadership at that time:

Interviewer: *When you came here, did you allocate, "oh you must come here, you must put your house here?"*

MC4: *No, we didn't, you just choose where. I'm going to be here, and the other one said, no I'm also going to be here.*

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<sup>27</sup> This is corroborated by RP2, who was in the same committee as RP9, and MDF3, who was from a different committee. According to RP2, they had arrived as part of a small group, no more than ten. MDF3 also referred to a "group of seven."

*Interviewer:* Okay, okay. And did you figure out you should put toilets, or where you must dump your trash or anything like that?

*MC4:* [smiles] at that time, no.

*Interviewer:* Not thinking about stuff like that?

*MC4:* No, we never think about the toilets, water, or where are we going to put our rubbish bins, no. – 14/5/2015

*MDF3:* The day when we were evicted, there was no committee. It was just individuals who volunteer themselves, to go out there and listen what the police are saying and so forth. And those people they were regarded as committee. – 21/5/2015

The pioneers in this wave built their houses at night, for several reasons. According to MA1, the first settlers began to build "at night time, because in day, they were still scared" (18/6/2015). This was partly on the advice of residents from the original Marikana ("[Marikana One] told us that if we build in mid-day, Land Invasion will evict [us] immediately. So we decided to build at night," RP6 26/11/2014), and partly a result of trial and error ("If you lose plan A, ne, then you check plan B, how you can do right. And then if Plan B works right, then we use that plan," MA1 18/6/2015).

But caution soon turned into risk-taking. According to RP6 (26/11/2014), "the problem is that on Saturday [9/8/2014], the people came in mid-day, in morning hours to build the shelters. I'm think, we called them, I think so, I think we called them, tell them that, oh, we have numbers, so come! [...] And then they build in mid-day. It's when law enforcement come and evict on Sunday [10/8/2014]." MB5, in a different section of Marikana, told me that she came to mark her plot with sticks on Saturday 9/8/2014, but when the next day came, she built during the day because the ALIU was not around—if they had been present, she would have waited.

Most people I spoke to reported that the first settlers in early August 2014 were "youngsters", "people like you [interviewer] with a wife and young kids who wants to start a family" (pers. comm., 20/6/2015). Towards the end of August, though, things had changed. A middle-aged couple I spoke to, for instance, said that they waited for a whole month before

deciding that it was safe to move to Marikana (pers. comm., 20/6/2015). When they came, they moved during the day, because law enforcement (though present) did nothing to stop them. However, this quiescence had come only after a long period of confrontational eviction activity—the subject of my next section.

#### *The 3/8/2014 – 5/9/2014 eviction operation*

Learning from residents at the old Marikana occupation, the new wave of settlers began building their houses at night so that they would not come under ALIU pressure immediately. But despite this effort at stealth, law enforcement agencies showed up the next morning, and began to monitor the land invasion on 3/8/2014 (Nortje 2014). The owner of erf 145, which later became the north section of Marikana, hired about 40 private security guards to defend his land from the first week of August (ibid.). A sheriff of the courts served notice of an interim interdict on the land invaders on Erf 149-RE (the future Rolihlahla area) on 8/8/2014, and an eviction operation commenced on 10/8/2014 next to the original 2013 Marikana land occupation.

For a young man I spoke to, there was no question of resisting the ALIU personnel:

*I didn't try [to stop them], because I don't like to fight. I just allow them to do what they sent to do, because what I know is that they were sent, it was not their... it was not what they want to do. Because what I know is that if it was dependent to them, they are the people, and they were talking to us. They were telling us that they are not doing this for us [i.e., for personal reasons], it's because it's our government who sent them* – RP8, 26/11/2014

This was characteristic of many of the residents I spoke to regarding their experience of eviction: though some had thrown stones at the ALIU crew, most, rather surprisingly, explained that they understood that the workers were "only doing their job." According to Activist 1, this was true of the first wave of Marikana settlers as well—at least until his own example inspired them to resist (28/10/2014). Others, however, said that they would mobilise in solidarity with their friends facing eviction: "we're going to go as a community, to try to stop them. So [just] because it doesn't affect you on this side, you don't say 'I'm safe,' you

don't isolate yourself. You don't know, tomorrow [law enforcement] are going to come on this side" (RP10 6/2/2015). But Marikana soon grew so large that settlers in one corner would often have no knowledge of an eviction operation in another. The land invasion had become generalised and decentralised, and the tide had turned in favour of the settlers.

On their part, it is clear that the ALIU did not take down homes indiscriminately, unlike what the community reported in April 2013. 69 houses in total were marked and allowed to stay (RP6 26/11/2014; Nortje 2014) pending the finalisation of an eviction order (after various legal twists and turns, the case is still pending as of end-May 2015).

Information sharing also happened between ALIU officers and residents: some Xhosa-speaking ALIU staff reportedly helped by telling Marikana residents about the signs they would look for when deciding whether to demolish a structure.<sup>28</sup> For instance, they had to do household activities like cooking, cleaning, or napping; and importantly, the floor had to be covered, not undisturbed grass: "they said, you must look like you are serious about it!" (MC4 20/6/2015). Naturally, the settlers spread the word. According to RP6, it was only on 10/8/2014<sup>29</sup> that law enforcement officers began to come and tear down houses—the trigger was that people had been building in broad daylight. But regardless of the exact dates, eviction was a constant fear from the start of August. And this was not the Marikana community's only brush with the law: several residents were arrested on charges of public violence (Lt Col Nel; Star (staff reporter) 2014).

However, several events marked a turning point in the Marikana residents' fight to stay on the land. First, external activists with legal experience got involved. For instance, A2, a paralegal and community activist living in Delft, Cape Town was able to stop an eviction

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<sup>28</sup> Under South African law, eviction from a house is only permissible with a court order. Therefore, ALIU staff on the ground have to decide whether or not a structure constitutes a "house"; those that do not meet the criteria are liable for demolition

<sup>29</sup> For eviction dates, recall was fairly accurate because I tried to establish dates in the presence of multiple informants, and to confirm which day of the week the evictions took place. Remaining disagreements in the eviction dates can be attributed to the sheer size of Marikana—law enforcement agencies operated in different parts of Marikana on different days.

operation on 15/8/2014 by pointing out that the ALIU did not have any authorisation (i.e., a valid court order) to carry out such an eviction (A2 16/2/2015, RP1 12/1/2015). Residents in a different part of Marikana got in touch with the Ses'khona People's Rights Movement during a large-scale eviction operation on 22/8/2014. Although the small team who had initiated the land invasion wanted to get Abahlali baseMjondolo's help, activists from that organisation were not contactable. Ses'khona was not their first choice. "I was not interested in Ses'khona [...] I can't support people who throw poo," MC4 said, referring to the Ses'khona-organised protests at the airport and the Parliament building (20/6/2015). But it was out of desperation that the settlers reached out to Ses'khona. As it happened, Loyiso Nkohlhla (Ses'khona's secretary-general), Xolani Joja (Ses'khona Branch Executive, but also chairperson of SANCO's Philippi branch), and Mafo Siyabulela (Ses'khona's Chief Organiser) were leaving the Bellville Magistrates' Court together with lawyers that day, after a court session connected with Ses'khona's "poo protests" of mid-2013, when they were contacted by settlers from Marikana. They rushed to the scene. Reportedly, the lawyers spotted that the court order—purportedly an interdict on the land invasion—was only a draft which had not been authorised by a court. Amid the widespread resistance, violence, and looting of nearby shops and warehouses, Nkohlhla successfully negotiated with law enforcement personnel to call off the operation (MDF1 19/3/2015, MDF3 14/5/2015). Following that, on the same day, he convened a mass meeting among the Marikana settlers to begin organising the nascent community (the subject of the next chapter).

Besides the Marikana settlers' own efforts to engage external legal and activist resources, the political context had also shifted. Perhaps most significantly as regards the municipality's ability and willingness to sustain their activities against the residents, SAPS advised landowners and the municipality that they would not be able to indefinitely support an eviction operation, according to an affidavit from a landowner in one of the Marikana

court cases (Power 2014). Besides the drain on resources, SAPS argued that it had damaged police relations with the community, who were accusing them of "being partisan and siding with the landowners." Policing operations would be put at risk. SAPS also took the position that landowners were not doing enough to protect their land—indeed, they amended their operational plan for evictions, so that SAPS would not get involved unless landowners had secured, or were ready to secure, their property by means of fencing and private security. Lastly, they and the ALIU advised landowners that the operations could not continue without a court order. This initiated the legal process, and put an end to eviction operations. Without police assistance, the eviction operation could not continue—giving free rein to the land invasion.

There is also evidence that internal procedures within the municipal government and SAPS changed between the April-May 2013 and the August 2014 eviction operations. According to Sims (2015), "the City of Cape Town has also been learning in terms of their own actions... we've gotten our act together in such a way that there's very little that an Anti-Eviction Campaign can fault us on, in terms of doing things against the law." The media outcry and national-level oversight imposed on the City of Cape Town following an eviction in Lwandle, near Strand, Cape Town, on 2–3 June 2014, almost certainly was a factor. In that case, the Lwandle Eviction Ministerial Enquiry convened by national Housing Minister Lindiwe Sisulu raised questions about the municipality's and police's conduct of eviction operations.<sup>30</sup> Lt Col Nel (22/5/2015), reading from an SAPS internal document on the Marikana eviction operation, reported that SAPS officers raised questions to their support of municipal law enforcement operations in Marikana and their compliance with the

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<sup>30</sup> In their report, the commission of inquiry found that SAPS had not conducted their due diligence in a number of areas before participating in the Lwandle eviction operation: among other things, they failed to

- Check that an eviction order had been granted
- Minute operational planning discussions
- Check that the evictees would have alternative accommodation
- Ensure that the ward councillor was involved in meetings with stakeholders
- Prepare a National Instruction for evictions (Potgieter et al. 2014, 223–27).



recommendation of the Enquiry. Moreover, court documents from the various Marikana cases have shown that SAPS assistance is now conditional on landowners taking steps to secure their property, including fencing the area and hiring private security (Nortje 2014, 15; Power 2014; Fischer 2014). Finally, it has been reported that municipal law enforcement agencies are taking a less confrontational stance towards land occupiers, leaving more structures untouched in eviction operations (Knoetze 2014). This likely means that under media pressure and executive oversight from higher levels of government (primarily the Lwandle Ministerial Enquiry), they are becoming more conservative in their assessment of what constitutes an "unoccupied" structure. All signs point to a shift in the political opportunity structure in favour of land invaders.

The cessation of ALIU-led operations by 22/8/2014 for Marikana Two (and 5/9/2014 for Rolihlahla Park) meant that the short-term future of Marikana residents was secured until the legal process ran its course. This began a period of consolidation and institutionalisation—the subject of my next chapter.

## **Implications**

If the success of a land invasion is the entrenchment of a new land occupation, Marikana was certainly successful. South Africa's pro-poor rights jurisprudence played an enabling role (Sunstein 2001; Huchzermeyer 2003), as did the increased scrutiny that the Cape Town municipal government and the SAPS came under following the Lwandle evictions of 2–3 June 2014, discussed in the previous section. However, these only constitute the removal of constraints on land invasions; unless the land invaders themselves knew about the policy changes, they could not have been the cause of land invasion. And in conversations with Marikana land invaders, I found that they did not in fact know about the land invasion and eviction in Lwandle (MDF2, MC4 20/6/2015). Therefore, the shift in opportunity structure could not have triggered the land invasion. What, then, were the contributing factors?

Since a central assumption of the land invasion literature is that organisation is a key factor in land invasions, and public statements on Marikana have perpetuated the idea that it was "organised," I turn first to the available evidence of organisation. I then consider other possible factors that contributed to the mobilisation and success of the land invaders.

### *Organisation in the Marikana land invasion*

Planning meetings did take place among some of the Marikana land invaders before each land invasion. Mthawelanga in November 2012 began next to Lower Crossroads when an older street committee member overheard 'youngsters' talking about wanting to move out from their family homes and live with their partners (MDF2 18/6/2015). By her account, the land invasion happened quite spontaneously: she convened a meeting in her neighbourhood after hearing these youngsters, and they moved to invade land that same day, moving their hokkies out of their landlords' backyards and toyi-toying through the streets. Although land invasions have developed in South Africa and Cape Town for generations, this particular episode likely made land invasion a part of the repertoire of contention for residents in the area. Early in 2013, a backyarder from Lower Crossroads convened a meeting next to Goal supermarket—on the land that later became Marikana (reportedly through Facebook). At this meeting, more grievances were shared, about the criminal activity that had allegedly taken place on the land, as well as the need for affordable housing. This meeting led to about 100 people launching a land invasion (Bhejula 25/5/2015). A third land invasion—the second on Marikana land—was sparked by a meeting held on 24/7/2014, again among backyarders from Lower Crossroads, where they discussed similar grievances. As a direct result of this meeting, about ten structures were built on 2/8/2015, and the numbers grew from there. Thus the Marikana land occupation was born. Mass meetings, which were held to discuss common problems and issues, were the *mobilising structures* through which the decision was made and communicated to take a collective action, namely, invade land.

However, these meetings did not involve much else beyond resolving to invade land. No leadership was elected at that point, nor were plots assigned or toilet and trash sites demarcated (MC4 14/5/2015, MDF3 21/5/2015). The accounts are unanimous: there were no leaders during the land invasion. No one was around to allocate land. Instead, each person staked out whatever they could claim with their material, and began to build immediately (MDF4; pers. comm., 2/5/2015; MC4, 14/5/2015; MB5, 20/6/2015). If they did not bring their material in, or leave someone on-site to guard their plot while they arranged transport, they risked losing their site (ME1, 18/6/2015). Even at the end of August, people were still arriving and claiming large, well-located plots on their own initiative<sup>31</sup> (pers. comm. 20/6/2015). In addition, both Marikana residents and external activists were adamant that no external organisations were involved. Abahlali baseMjondolo was only called in to assist the first Marikana land invasion after law enforcement agencies had suppressed two failed attempts; Ses'khona only came in nearly three weeks after the second land invasion began. Informants emphasised that organisational activity only began *after* the land invasion, with elections for community leaders.

However, there was some continuity between the people involved in each land invasion attempt: one informant was involved in all three, while another said that she was part of a small team of 3–5 individuals from the April 2013 Marikana land invasion who came together to "restart" Marikana with the August 2014 invasion. Therefore, loose meetings of local backyarders and young people seem to have been the trigger for the land invasion; no formal, pre-existing organisation was responsible, though a small number of participants were more deeply involved and ensured a degree of continuity. In Tarrow's

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<sup>31</sup> In this case, at the beginning of August a middle-aged couple heard from their son-in-law's family (who had already moved to Marikana) that a land invasion was underway in Marikana; they waited till the end of August, moving only when they were sure that Marikana was there to stay and they would not be evicted by law enforcement. When I asked them how they had got such a large, well-located plot when they had come so late (they had a hokkie of three rooms close to the road), they said that they were able to claim the land because their neighbours had begun to use it as a rubbish dump; they cleaned up the land and took it as their plot. They confirmed that no one allocated land for them.

(2011, 123–24) distinction between three senses of 'organisation', this comes close to a loosely-organised episode of collective action with an activist network supporting it.

#### *Why did Marikana happen? Other contributing factors*

Of interest, though, is how the August 2014 land invasion took off. The household survey of Marikana residents suggests that these mass meetings, while providing a skeletal core of organisation, could not possibly have been the main mobilising factor. In the survey, I asked respondents how they found out that people were moving to Marikana. Only one respondent in the entire sample mentioned a mass meeting, compared to half who found out by seeing it in progress (two-thirds, when considering only the respondents who moved to Marikana during the land invasion). If the meeting of 24/7/2014 really drew 2000 participants as claimed (nearly a tenth of Marikana's total population!), it is improbable that a randomised sample of around 150 respondents did not uncover more of them.<sup>32</sup> I consider it likely instead that this figure of 2000 attendees was inflated, and based on the informant's estimate of how many structures were built in the actual land invasion. I conclude that though there was indeed a mobilisation effort, the core of that mobilisation (those who had attended the community meeting or meetings) formed a tiny proportion of the people who were mobilised.

#### *From individual goals to a collective tactic?*

In interviews and conversations conducted throughout Marikana, I asked residents why they had chosen to become land occupiers. Many cited individual reasons: they wanted to "escape rent" and exploitative landlords. Others were drawn to Marikana for what might be called "speculative" reasons. They believed that the Marikana community might be rehoused in public housing, and they wanted to stake a claim to a house of their own, while continuing to stay elsewhere for convenience or safety (5/2/2015). These perspectives were hard to come by because speculative owners tended not to live in Marikana, and were therefore

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<sup>32</sup> It is also hard to imagine that a 2000-strong public gathering would have escaped the notice of local police officers, two of whom I probed extensively on any knowledge of organisation leading up to Marikana. The Philippi East SAPS station is located less than five minutes' drive from the Marikana site.

unreachable.<sup>33</sup> Committee members, however, provided second-hand confirmation that these speculative owners did exist.

Younger respondents talked about wanting to try living on their own for the first time (RP10, 6/2/2015), or simply escaping their nagging parents (pers. comm. 23/4/2015). For older respondents, a representative opinion came from one of the leaders of the first land invasion, Bhejula, who was previously a backyarder in Lower Crossroads:

*My goal is just to have a place where I can stay with my kids and my wife, like other people as well. We were not working. Marikana was the right place for us, I feel. At that time, we had no thoughts of achieving other things from government. All that we want from Day One is a place to stay" – 25/5/2015*

Many residents' goals had plans that stretched into the longer term. MB4, a family man in his late 30s, told me, "I don't want to stay here all my life; it's not right, this place," referring to informal settlements (25/4/2015). He wanted to receive a housing subsidy so that he could have a formal house of his own, but if it took too long he would prefer to get upgraded infrastructure in Marikana. Either way, moving to Marikana was an investment in the future. MB5, a single mother in her late 30s with four children, came to Marikana because "I'm not young any more, I want a proper house" (20/6/2015). Likewise, MDF1, a married mother of two whose husband worked away from Cape Town, said, "I have a right to have my house, because I am old enough, I have two children." MDF3, a married man in his mid-40s with three children, had come to "extend the family" by allowing their children (aged 25, 19, and 13) to take over his family home in Gugulethu, while he found a new place for himself and his wife to grow old in (14/5/2015). His friend ME4, also a father, wanted to "have a proper house for me with my children, and to make sure that no matter I passed away, my kids they have got their home to stay" (21/5/2015). Likewise, MC4 explained that she wanted to stay in a hokkie of her own in Marikana, not be moved to temporary or emergency housing, because "if something happen to me, where will my kids go?"

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<sup>33</sup> I met one speculative owner, a renter in Lower Crossroads, who had allowed a friend to stay rent-free in his hokkie in Marikana (5/2/2015)

(20/6/2015). These responses demonstrated three themes: a logic of **investment** and upward mobility, intergenerational **security** of making sure their children were taken care of, and **desert** that was grounded in their status as parents and their rights as citizens.

Nevertheless, while these reasons are valid explanations at the individual level, they do not say anything about the causes of the land invasion. Rather, they are explanations for why these respondents joined an *ongoing* land invasion. Moreover, to the extent that respondents offered collective-level explanations (e.g., "we were tired of renting"), they tended to have the same weakness as the deprivation-frustration-action hypothesis discussed above: other similarly poor areas undoubtedly have large numbers of frustrated backyarders but no land invasions, so at best this is a necessary but not sufficient condition for land invasions.

There is a case for seeing the land invasion as a tactic: a non-routine collective action intentionally employed by a social movement to demand or resist social change. Taylor and van Dyke (2004) note that there is no consensus on what constitutes a tactic. They suggest that tactics are contentious events intentionally employed by social movements to demand or resist social change, and that they have a movement- or identity-building quality. So the three necessary elements of a tactic are, by their definition, *contestation*, *intentionality*, and *identity-building*. However, I argue that Marikana did not fulfil these criteria.

Several leaders suggested that they did indeed see the land invasion as a way for their constituency to make claims on government. For instance, MDF2 explained that the Mthawelanga land invasion was a means to demonstrate her community's need for housing: "the councillor wasn't doing anything to give us land. So we decided, if he doesn't want to help us, we go and seek land on our own" (18/6/2015). After they had been suppressed by law enforcement agencies, she took the lead to draft a memorandum to the ward councillor to

voice the people's need for housing. Bhejula, a leader in the first Marikana occupation, explained that without taking direct action, other tactics would not be fruitful:

*Interviewer: Why did you choose to occupy the land, instead of doing other things like protesting, toyi-toying...*  
*Bhejula: If you saw this piece of empty land, the first thing you will think of doing is to occupy the land. These [other] things are useless unless you take action first. Otherwise who's going to help you? You can't just ask nicely, it's useless. – interview, 21/5/2015*

In other words, land invasion could perhaps be conceptualised as a *tactical choice* made by participants at the mass meetings, because of the perceived or demonstrated futility of the alternatives. Without bold action, Marikana land invaders expected that their wants and concerns would be brushed aside.

Zuern (2014, 287) observes that "as with many civic and new social movement protest actions, residents first sought to employ institutional routes to petition government" before they turned to more confrontational protest action during the 2009 service delivery-related mass mobilisations. This invites the question: did the would-be land occupiers also follow a pattern of escalation before they organised a land invasion? Some suggested that this was indeed the case:

*RP1: You asked if we engage with the government. You see, when the crime happened, [...] we reported [crime] several times, and the government do nothing. And then [we] can say, this land, instead of get reported for crime, it can be useful for people [to] occupy with their shacks. [...]*  
*Interviewer: When [did you report the crime]?*  
*RP2: This was in 2008.*  
*Interviewer: And since then, has it been effective?*  
*RP2: Nothing has been done about this place. There was complete silence. – interview, 30/10/2014*

Nevertheless, there are several issues with the view of land occupation as a tactic. If a tactic is a non-routine collective action undertaken intentionally to make demands for some sort of social change, who was the collective actor and what were its demands in this case? Neither of these is clear. Take for instance the collective actor. We know that land invasions

often snowball, as was the case here. A mobilisation of about 150 people in late April 2013 turned into 300–400 houses after just a few days, implying at least 2–3x growth; a July 2014 mobilisation of unknown numbers (but with an organising core of 3–5 people) mushrooms into a settlement of 5500 houses four weeks later. It is difficult to consider the 400 people in early May 2013 to be the same collective actor as the 150 people at the start or the 5500 householders who arrived in August 2014.

In fact, most people just showed up at Marikana not knowing anyone else (65% of the whole sample; 73% in the July-August 2014 land invasion period), having just seen it for themselves (51% in the whole sample; 67% in the land invasion). Furthermore, nearly three-quarters of the land invaders in July and August 2014 did not come from Lower Crossroads, and almost half were not even from Philippi, which makes it unlikely that the highly localised concern about the empty land being a crime hotspot was a factor for them. Given that they did not know about the original planning meetings, nor did they come from the local area, it is implausible that they were aware of or concerned about the grievances raised in those meetings. Certainly, every episode of contention has hangers-on of variable or uncertain commitment to the motivations of the collectivity. But here, the fact that so many people joined the land invasion so late in the game and were not connected to the original land invaders suggests that they did not share the Lower Crossroads backyarders' view of the land invasion as a tactical or strategic choice.

#### *A shared cultural frame*

*We are doing what's right for us. If you've voted, you deserve the houses, the services, because that's what they promised us.*

– MC4 7/5/2015

If it was not a tactic, what was it? I posit an alternative—the land invasion as a consequence of a shared cultural frame. Frames structure our understanding and interpretation of reality, and guide action. Dawson (2014) is only the latest to have argued that grievances may be a starting point from which leaders can mobilise a constituency for



collective action. As the quote above shows, some Marikana settlers felt that direct action was simply taking what was rightfully theirs. In support of the land invasion, I found several interlocking identities: people identified as victims of apartheid-era injustices, as tenants or backyarders, or simply as "joiners" who saw an opportunity and knew they had to seize it.

Land invasion must be seen in historical context: it had resonance as a way of redressing exclusionary apartheid policies under which people had been systematically evicted and excluded from land. As MA3 told me:

*You know District 6? District 6 was a place of the Blacks. Camps Bay, and Gardens, Blacks was staying there, Coloureds. But the government, the apartheid government, chased all the Blacks away. They built the hostels. You know, [it] was a hostel, Gugulethu. They built that hostels, New Crossroads, Nyanga, and Khayelitsha. And you know, they take Coloureds to put in Kingston. You know Kingston? Next to Maitland. Yeah, they put there. But now we want to go back to our places, we want District 6 now! Yeah! We want District 6!*  
– 14/5/2015

Similarly, MDF1 argued that the land

*... belong to our great-grandparents, this land they belong to our blood parents. The father of our fathers. Then the white people they are took from them, from our parents' hands. So now [we are] fighting for the people to have the land back.*  
– 19/3/2015

In other words, historical inequity was a powerful cultural frame that could be drawn on. Given that this inequity revolved around land, it naturally suggested the use of land occupation as a just means of redress. While individuals who came to Marikana later might have had nothing to do with the original Marikana settlers or their decisions and demands, they could share in this sense of historical inequity.

Others could make common cause with the movement by identifying as "the poor" (e.g., A1 pers. comm.) or "tenants" or "backyarders" (a common self-identification). Self-identifying as a "tenant" had a particularly biting connotation for some, as they felt it was unfair that they were working to pay off their landlords' home loans while the landlords themselves had the luxury of not working *and* the privilege of being homeowners (pers.

comm., 6/4/2015). Animosity between landlords and backyarders is extensively documented in the social anthropology of South African townships (Gilbert et al. 1997; Crankshaw, Gilbert, and Morris 2000; Bank 2007; Lemanski 2009); many Marikana residents resented their former landlords for imposing onerous conditions on them, expecting them to cook, locking them out of their toilets, denying permission to have guests or partners over, and so on. As backyarders, they longed for a place to call their own:

*The landlords are the masters on frustrating their tenants in our country. Funny that you are also helping this person, because this person also needs this money. But now, before all of this money thing, they have a right, or they have the nerve to treat you bad. That's, that's the main reason that made our place, or our dwelling, or our neighbourhood, or our community! To be furious and mad, and decided, within a period of two weeks, 6000 homes were built in this place. Because everyone was crying with the same thing. And then it made us the form of advertising, to move so fast, even the person who stays far as Kraaifonein, far as Worcester, who's a backyarder, is experiencing the same thing. That the landlord is treating me like trash. I'm not human human here. I feel like a prisoner in my own home. Now I need freedom. A place to breathe. I'm living in a box. So I must go to Marikana, I must go to Rolihlahla, where the life is... Asiyindawo!<sup>34</sup> A place called home. – RP2 12/11/2014*

Lastly, some hurried to take advantage of the opportunity to "escape rent." For instance, ME4 (Chapter 2, *Personal accounts*) came to Marikana after his neighbour joked that they would be the last backyarders left on their street, still paying rent to the landlords. Another respondent had seen the land invasion, and went into Marikana to scout out a site for herself (pers. comm. 14/5/2015). People around her, busy clearing and levelling land and preparing to build, advised her to bring her own material immediately, otherwise there wouldn't be space. She then hurried to hire a bakkie and bring her hokkie over from the backyard she was renting in. Yet another explained that "My cousin who stays over there [Lower Crossroads] phoned me and [...] said that there's space that has been occupied by the people there. If you want, come and occupy the space quickly. Then I came on that evening" (MC2 13/2/2015). A few were cautious, preferring to wait until the ALIU had stopped trying

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<sup>34</sup> We are going nowhere (Xhosa)

to evict the settlers (pers. comm., 20/6/2015). But as seen in these three stories, many Marikana settlers had a use-it-or-lose-it view of the situation; if they didn't come quickly, there would be no more space, and the opportunity would be gone.

As argued in the previous section, the explosive growth in the number of land invasion participants strongly suggests that the process of land invasion was not the result of a mobilisation of a previously-constituted collective actor. There was no pre-existing network through which they were called, no 'Marikana' prior to the land invasion. Rather, the land invasion itself was the process that constituted that collective actor. This collective actor shared a rich set of intertwined cultural frames that encompassed identity and suggested a logic of redress.

Even so, there is one last piece of the puzzle to piece together. We know that planning meetings formed an organisational core around which the land invasion began, though slowly—and in fits and starts from November 2012 to July 2014. We know that the land invasion only really took off after the 24/7/2014 planning meeting. We have established that it was a conscious tactical choice for at most a small proportion of Marikana settlers, and that it was facilitated by shared, overlapping cultural frames that suggested land invasion as a mode of redress. Nevertheless, we still lack an explanation for how this frame was mobilised among the larger subset of Marikana settlers who had no knowledge of the planning meetings. Bayat's (1997a; 1997b; 2007) notion of passive networks provide the answer.

#### *Land invasion as the product of a passive network*

The idea of a passive network completes the picture by explaining how a collective *frame* (oppressed / backyarder / poor) can translate into collective *action* in the absence of "active" organisation, whether formal associations or informal networks. Bayat (1997a, 16) theorised that passive networks allow atomised individuals to act collectively, by recognising

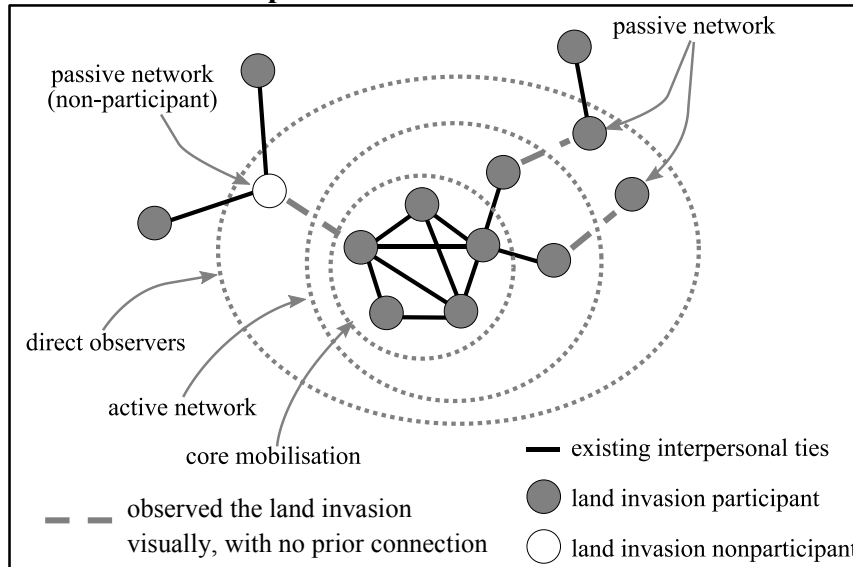
a commonality of interest between themselves and other potential social movement participants when they are brought together in a common space.

As discussed above, we know that Marikana settlers shared a small set of individual goals, and that there were frames they could identify with which suggested a logic of redress through invading land. But did Marikana settlers *recognise* the commonality of their interests? The discussion of their shared identity, above, suggests that they did. I was told time and time again that "we are all backyarders here." MC2 suggests that they shared the same struggles:

*We are facing the same challenges, and the way we came here, the stories, the struggles that we went through, that make us have to come to Marikana, they are the same kind of struggles, yes*  
– 13/2/2015

Bayat (1997a, 17) argues that in the absence of pre-existing relationships between social movement participants, a key prerequisite for passive networks to trigger action is the medium of *space*. Being proximate in space enables people to *visually* recognise others as fellow constituents, fellow social movement participants. This is similar to what McAdam (1985, 34) has called "cognitive liberation," the activation of a latent social movement constituency, but with the crucial addition that passive networks are theorised to be activated spatially. Certainly the land invaders utilised virtual spaces, particularly the public message posted on a Facebook wall that announced the original Marikana invasion (MC4 14/5/2015). But a key feature of the land invasion was that the contested physical space was its own advertising. As shown in the survey, a majority of Marikana settlers found out about the land invasion when they saw it for themselves: within the set of "direct observers" in Figure 3-1, these are the participants who had no interpersonal ties with the "core mobilisation" in the centre.

**Figure 3-1: Active and passive networks in the Marikana land invasion**



This schematic represents the mechanisms by which Marikana settlers and participants joined the land invasion. Dotted circles represent sets in interpersonal and physical space. The innermost circle can be thought of as the original team of movement participants (in this case, settlers); the middle circle encompasses both them and their family, friends and other existing contacts. The outermost circle includes later movement participants who had no interpersonal connection to them, but joined when they saw the land invasion in progress—the "passive network".

Even for the many settlers who had heard about the land invasion through friends and family, their contacts had also seen it happening for themselves (schematised as the "non-participant" in Figure 3-1). I would argue that these should be seen as an extension of the passive network. It certainly helped that Marikana was next to a popular stretch of supermarkets, and situated along the main transport corridor between Khayelitsha and Cape Town. People saw it on their way to work or to get groceries; even if they would not move to Marikana, they told their friends and family about it (cf. MB5, Chapter 2, *Personal accounts*).

Thus physical space occupied by the Marikana land invasion became its own organising medium; no active organisation was necessary because people negotiating identities of poor, oppressed, and backyarder *did not need to be told* to join a land invasion in progress.

## Conclusion

Passive networks are the missing link between the small core mobilisation and the large wave of later arrivals. Marikana did not exist as a collective actor prior to the land

invasion, which makes it implausible to characterise it as the outcome of a process of tactical choice. Neither are the planning meetings (i.e., the available evidence of formal organisation) a sufficient explanation for Marikana. Though the planning meetings—with a genealogy all the way to Mthawelanga—were important as the trigger for the land invasion, perhaps as few as 1-2% of Marikana's eventual 21,200 residents were actually mobilised through those meetings, or even from active networks. Rather, many found out about it through their own eyes. Drawing on a shared set of cultural frames, particularly their self-identification as the victims of historical inequity or as oppressed backyarders, Marikana settlers wanted to realise various goals: to escape high rents, ensure that their children would be provided for, leave their family home, or claim what they deserved as parents and citizens. These goals were varied but nevertheless highly compatible. Seeing a land invasion in progress conducted by people who shared their interests, they did not want to lose out on the opportunity.

The available evidence suggests that the final and largest wave in the Marikana land invasion had its origins in the planning meetings and two prior land invasions in the area. Those land invasions—the original Marikana of April 2013 and Mthawelanga of November 2012—had drawn together a small group of local activists who were determined to try again and again, till they got the land they needed for housing. Participants in these meetings provided a small organisational core around which the rest of Marikana grew. They were swamped by people—mostly backyarders—who had seen it for their own eyes (mobilised through passive networks) and came because they shared common and compatible goals with the original participants. Shared cultural frames helped to create a common identity between participants old and new. What helped to ensure the success of the land invasion were (1) the resources available, and (2) the favourable political opportunity structure. There was certainly learning and information exchange: the settlers at the first Marikana occupation and indeed some of the Anti-Land Invasion personnel offered advice to the land invaders as to how they

could avoid being evicted. External activists brought legal expertise to Marikana, stopping the eviction operation. On their part, law enforcement agencies (particularly the South African Police Services, SAPS) were constrained by the unfavourable findings of the recent Lwandle enquiry, as well as their own operational necessities of having to maintain effective policing in the area and not appear partisan. Without SAPS support, the eviction could not proceed, leaving Marikana entrenched. With this picture, I turn now to the evidence in Chapter 4, *Organising*.

## Chapter 4 Organising: Consolidating Marikana

Having won a reprieve from eviction through the eleventh-hour involvement of external players, Marikana settlers in the August 2014 land invasion began to look to the long term. They started building up structures which performed local governance functions (cf. Katsaura 2012; Bénit-Gbaffou and Katsaura 2014): first "task teams," followed by committees, and then a Marikana Development Forum (MDF). In addition, there were many other levels of emergent organisation in Marikana, from the informal networks forged between neighbours and in churches and shebeens, to the residents banding together to provide public services such as crèches and communal taps. Some of these efforts had a more entrepreneurial character, while others reflected existing and familiar institutional forms that had been learnt from elsewhere.

I chose to focus primarily on residents' participation in communal matters—i.e., providing public goods like services (water, toilets), crime prevention, and dispute resolution to a spatially-bounded residential neighbourhood. This focus on what Staniland (2008) has referred to as "residential civil society" came about partly because of the limits of the data I was able to gather, and partly from the interests of Marikana residents. Besides my tight timetable and language limitations, suspicion of outsiders made it difficult to gather information on interpersonal ties, because people became wary of, or fatigued by, outsiders asking too many questions. Most of all, my data collection was guided in part by Marikana residents themselves, and their overriding concerns and priorities. Their top priorities were fighting eviction, obtaining services, and controlling crime; hence my own focus on the forms, practices, and routines of *grassroots governance*.<sup>35</sup>

But because I did not gather data on structures of grassroots governance in townships or informal settlements outside of Marikana, I could not say for sure what were the

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<sup>35</sup> I discuss terminology in the literature review below



similarities and differences between Marikana and other places. The observations that follow must be understood as merely an analytic description of organisational practices and routines—and only as they were conceptualised by Marikana leaders themselves.

I have arranged this discussion in thematic segments. This arrangement is a compromise between two inconvenient facts: while Marikana's organisational structures evolved in a path-dependent manner, the two main rival structures (the MDF and the Rolihlahla Park committee) developed at their own pace through interaction and conflict with other entities, demands from ordinary residents on the ground, and influences from outside. Sorting the material into themes focused attention on similar developments in both structures' forms and practices, rather than change over time. The themes are the emergence of structures of grassroots governance in Marikana, the identities they adopted, the consolidation of those structures, and the functions and practices of those structures. I begin by setting up some questions on organisation using perspectives from organisational theory, followed by a literature review of studies of organisation in South African townships and informal settlements.

### **Theory: Perspectives on organisation**

The previous chapter utilised a theoretical framework drawn from the 'mainstream' of social movement theory (SMT) to analyse an episode of collective action. However, the unstructured, collective action that constituted the Marikana land invasion had, by the end of it, given way to an increasingly structured, institutionalised set of organisational forms and practices. This made it useful to borrow insights from organisational theory (OT), particularly regarding emergent organisation, to guide my analysis.

SMT began to conceptualise organisation in response to Olson's (1965) puzzle—how (i.e., through what mechanisms) do individuals cooperate to provide social goods? The resource mobilisation paradigm's answer is *mobilising structures*, or the "collective

vehicles... through which people mobilize and engage in collective action" (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996b, 3). Given this point of departure, the main question is whether organisation really helps or hurts movements (Clemens and Minkoff 2004). However, the SMT paradigm has ended to focus on a unit of analysis (the social movement) and a dependent variable (movement outcomes) that is inconvenient for the present discussion. Marikana's grassroots structures are social movement organisations rather than social movements. Moreover, they have barely got off the ground, making it premature to evaluate their outcomes.

OT offers a toolkit more suitable to conceptualise Marikana's structures. In OT, organisations are "goal-directed, boundary-maintaining, and socially constructed systems of human activity" (Aldrich and Ruef 2006, 4–6). They have intentionality; distinguish between members and non-members, or constituents and non-constituents; and incorporate roles and routines which also reflect and confer power, status, and legitimacy. OT holds that organisational "entrepreneurship" is dependent both on individual drive and the resources available in one's environment (Scott 2003, 169–70). New organisations "do not emerge in a vacuum": rather, they frequently copy existing, familiar formats, or assemble various aspects of different existing models (Scott 2003, 171; Scott 2008, 95). Early theorists posited that (bureaucratic) organisational practices emerged because they are reliable and efficient, hence serving the logic of modernity (Weber 1922 [1978], 223; Scott 2003, 156–63). But others have argued that efficiency grounds are insufficient to account for all bureaucratisation observed today; rather, in their view organisation is spurred by legitimating beliefs and expectations about coordinated activity, which amount to modern-day myths (J. W. Meyer and Rowan 1977; DiMaggio and Powell 1983). So organising is undertaken not just on efficiency/rationality grounds; if organising is associated with normatively desirable values

(like efficiency and rationality), failure to adopt particular organisational forms can compromise legitimacy (Meyer and Rowan 1977, 345).

As Meyer and Rowan (1977, 345) observe, "the building blocks for organizations come to be littered around the societal landscape; it takes only a little entrepreneurial energy to assemble them into a structure." These building blocks include *organisational forms* and *practices*. The idea of building blocks of organisation is not alien to SMT, as several scholars have adapted the idea of *repertoires* of contention to describe the set of "culturally or experientially available" organisational forms (Clemens 1993; Clemens and Minkoff 2004; McCarthy and Walker 2004). There is active debate about the definition of "organisational form" (Aldrich and Ruef 2006, 114–15), but because Marikana organisations were new, unstable, and constantly undergoing change, I use their members' subjective self-definitions.<sup>36</sup> I define practices simply as the set of activities that is undertaken by an organisational form. I do not have an a priori typology of practices, but they may be goal-directed or culturally-defined (repertoires) in character. Organisational forms and practices in South African townships and informal settlements have been well-documented, and a discussion of this repertoire follows in the next section.

To make sense of diversity in organisational forms and practices, some OT scholars have proposed a distinction between bureaucratic and democratic organisations (Rothschild and Whitt 1989, 62–63). It was earlier posited that bureaucratisation tends to take on a momentum of its own in search of efficiency or legitimacy. But democratic values tend to be important particularly to SMOs because their constituencies are typically constituted by groups that are politically underrepresented and marginalised (cf. Epstein 1991; Cooper-Knock 2009). Grassroots democracy can be a frame that legitimates SMOs and keeps members loyal. However, it can also reduce efficiency and become unmanageable in the face

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<sup>36</sup> I.e., their answer to a question like: "what kinds of organisations do you have in Marikana?"

of complexity, which is the premise of the "iron law of oligarchy"—however democratic an organisation may be initially, it will inevitably turn oligarchic (Clemens and Minkoff 2004). There is therefore a tension between bureaucratic and democratic organisational practices in SMOs: bureaucratic organisation offers efficiency; democratic organisation, legitimacy.

This brief theoretical overview furnishes us with a set of questions about emergent organising in new land occupations. What is the nature of organisation in the Marikana informal settlement? What are the organisational models and practices that Marikana has adopted? How have they ranged from bureaucratic to democratic? How do they generate legitimacy?

The OT perspective and land invasion case studies in the existing literature also provide two models for how organising took shape in Marikana. To the extent that the land invasion was coordinated or "orchestrated," we would expect the organisers to serve as leaders in the land occupation, and other signs of continuity. On the other hand, if the land invasion was spontaneous, we would expect new structures and practices to emerge. OT predicts that because of concerns of efficiency and legitimacy, organisational "entrepreneurs" takes their cue from the culturally-available repertoire, or the building blocks of organisation. This can be either direct copying of a single organisational template or a *bricolage* of practices from many different models (Scott 2003, 171). Since new organisations are expected to draw from existing organisational forms and practices, I now survey the literature on organisations in the new South Africa.

### **Literature review: SMOs in the new South Africa**

The most prominent organisations in Marikana are the committees at various levels. For an outsider, these perform gatekeeping functions: "if somebody like you [the researcher], or an NGO worker is coming to give help, then it must be going through the chairperson first" (MB4, 25/4/2015). For residents, these committees fulfil governance functions that the

state cannot or is unable to provide (such as dispensing justice) while lobbying the state for services and development. Therefore, I will refer to them as *structures of grassroots*<sup>37</sup> *governance*. To set the scene, I sketch a brief history of community organising in South African townships culminating in the street committees, and, counterpoised against that, the new social movements that have emerged since 1994.

Grassroots governance institutions like street committees have been a part of urban life in South Africa for generations (Burman and Schärf 1990; Lee and Seekings 2002). Burman and Schärf (1990, 706–07) posit three possible origins for street committees: that they were spontaneously created; based on the village committees; or emerged when burial societies took on a greater role in local governance. Street committees were overseen by umbrella bodies called "civics" (short for civic organisations). As repression worsened under apartheid, committees became the foci of resistance activities, finally breaking out into the township revolts of the mid-1980s (Swilling 1987; Mayekiso 1996, 74–75). Moreover, the decentralised, cellular organisational form of the street committee was crucial to ensuring the survival of the struggle (Swilling 1987; Seekings 2000, 143).

Because of their varied origins and adaptation to different circumstances, street committees are a bricolage of practices that serve several types of functions. First, they *resolve disputes* arising from quarrels between family or neighbours, such as antisocial behaviour (playing music too loudly), small thefts, or disagreements over plot boundaries (Cherry, Jones, and Seekings 2000; Barry et al. 2007). They also provide *informal justice* by dealing with theft, killings, and other crimes, and may run neighbourhood patrols on their

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<sup>37</sup> Oldfield (2000; 2002) and Katsaura (2012) refer to these as "community governance." However, the adjective *community* might not be appropriate as it assumes something that cannot be taken for granted—was Marikana truly a community? Staniland (2008) uses the term "residential civil society," but this includes both invited and invented spaces. Another alternative, "informal governance structure" (by analogy to "informal justice") was considered, but rejected because these structures—though informal in the sense that they are not explicitly sanctioned by the state—certainly aspire towards *formal*-ness in their organisational practices. For this reason, I emphasise their ground-up, auto-constructed nature by calling them "grassroots governance" rather than calling them "informal governance" or presuming that they are manifestations of a community.

own or with the assistance of the local police (Burman and Schärf 1990; Lee and Seekings 2002). Finally, they *represent* the area's residents to higher levels of governance, whether formal or informal (Staniland 2008).

With the transition to democracy, many street committees were institutionalised as the lowest rung of the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO); above them were the area committees and civics, and further up the regional, provincial, and national councils (Mayekiso 1996; Cherry, Jones, and Seekings 2000; Staniland 2008). Other civics not under SANCO were also active, though decreasing in prominence (cf. Seekings 1998; Staniland 2008). Meanwhile, governance structures proliferated as the new South African state committed itself towards creating institutionalised channels for participation (Staniland 2008). These included community policing forums (CPFs: Tshehla 2002; Meth 2011), ward committees (Oldfield 2008, 490; Staniland 2008), and branch executive committees (BECs: Meth 2013). In practice, as Piven and Cloward (1979) would have warned, these became conduits of co-optation—they became tools for one-way communication (Staniland 2008, 41; Bénit-Gbaffou 2012, 185–86), and channelled participatory energy into basically powerless entities (Bénit-Gbaffou 2008; Piper and Deacon 2009). Many commentators noted a decline in civil society activity, and diagnosed a crisis of influence and legitimacy in SANCO even as the state advocated participatory governance (Lanegran 1996; Staniland 2008; Seekings 2011; Katsaura 2012, 325). Sinwell (2010a) summarises the key issue: "participatory governance" as conceived in South Africa serves the interests of those in power, by offering legitimacy ("community buy-in") with little to no actual influence—let alone control—on developmental decision-making. A consensus grew that it is "only when you are radical that you are getting heard" (Bénit-Gbaffou 2008, 10).

Provoked by the transition from a Keynesian to neoliberal economic orientation and the associated service cut-offs and evictions, new SMOs emerged that directly challenged the

state (Adelzadeh 1996; Bond 1998; Desai and Pithouse 2004; Bond 2005; van Heusden and Pointer 2006; Madlingozi 2007; Bond 2010; Hart 2011; Bond 2012, 261; Zuern 2014). They created and operated in ground-up, *invented* spaces of participation (Cornwall 2004; Gaventa 2004), as opposed to the *invited* spaces institutionalised by the state. Examples of such SMOs were the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign (AEC), the Gauteng-based Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF) and its affiliate the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC), and the Concerned Citizens Forum (CCF) and Abahlali baseMjondolo (Abahlali) both in Durban. These sprang up to advocate local causes, especially fighting eviction or changes in service payment terms. They employed direct action, such as reconnecting privatised service connections (Egan and Wafer 2006; Dugard 2010; Matlala and Bénit-Gbaffou 2012) or squatting in public housing developments (Oldfield 2000; Sinwell 2010b). But many of the new SMOs' most significant victories were won not through mobilisation but in the courts (Tissington 2012; Madlingozi 2014). In fact, the first case to establish that socioeconomic rights contained in the Constitution were judicially enforceable was an eviction case, *Government of the RSA and others v Grootboom and others* [2000] ZACC 19 (Sunstein 2001; Huchzermeyer 2003). However, SMOs did not always litigate to win—the AEC has used them to buy time for families while they challenge eviction orders, and to put on record the human suffering exacted by evictions (Oldfield and Stokke 2006).

Street committees and other grassroots governance structures below the ward level have not been widely researched since the transition to democracy (Meth 2013; Drivdal 2014, chap. 3; though see *ibid.* and Katsaura 2012 for exceptions). In particular, little attention has been paid to the practices of the street committees—though there are exceptions (Lee and Seekings 2002; Barry et al. 2007; Drivdal 2014). Few studies have comprehensively studied the practices of grassroots governance structures. Drivdal's (2014) doctoral dissertation is the main exception. But I am not aware of any post-apartheid study that documents the practices

and forms that emergent grassroots governance structures assume in a new settlement (cf. Cole 1987, chap. 1). While many case studies have been done on the micro-politics and practices of new SMOs or community-based organisations (Desai and Pithouse 2004; Pointer 2004; Miraftab and Wills 2005; Ballard, Habib, and Valodia 2006; Miraftab 2006; Pithouse 2009), similar detail has not been attempted for emergent grassroots governance structures. Marikana offered a chance to plug the gap in the literature.

### **The emergence of grassroots governance structures in Marikana**

Rolihlahla Park elected a "task team" in the midst of the eviction operation, on 18/8/2014. The "Old Committee" emerged at about the same time, on 16/8/2014. Marikana Two elected their own task team (the "Marikana task team") just days later on 22/8/2014, in a meeting convened by Ses'khona leaders right after they had successfully intervened to halt the evictions in their area. Marikana Two began to organise section committees soon after (MB4, 18/4/2015; MDF4, 7/5/2015). Clearly, the Marikana settlers lost no time setting up these grassroots governance structures. But this invites the question: why do people start committees?

Marikana residents were generally bemused or puzzled when I asked this question; the answer seemed obvious to them. Many people simply told me that every settlement had leaders, so Marikana was no different. Some explained that task teams were formed for **functional** reasons, when Marikana settlers had to organise against hostile externals or provide internal order. I was also told that it was part of African **culture** to be socialised within a system of traditional councils, which helped preserve community norms and expectations of decent behaviour. Below, I detail the creation of the two main governance structures, the Marikana task team and the Rolihlahla Park task team, and the initial emergence of "committees."



Marikana residents called their first structures of grassroots governance "task teams." These were elected, like the later section committees and the Marikana Development Forum (MDF). "Task teams" do not appear to be documented in the literature, although the idea of a "crisis committee" may carry similar connotations of a ground-up response to a one-time situation (cf. the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee or the Alexandra Vukuzenzele Crisis Committee (Sinwell 2009)). It seems to be well-understood that task teams are temporary and task-oriented; they are supposed to disband after they perform their function (MDF4; Siyabulela 16/5/2015; Mpondwana 8/5/2015). The fact that I was told this by a Ses'khona leader and an ANC councillor who was viewed with suspicion by some Ses'khona and local leaders strongly suggests that this understanding of "task team" is widely accepted, and could be considered part of a repertoire of organisational forms. Thus, the task teams can be understood to serve functional ends.

The Rolihlahla Park task team was elected on 18/8/2014, at a mass meeting along Protea Road which bisects Marikana, with about 100–200 settlers in attendance. According to two of the original Rolihlahla Park settlers—one of whom was the vice-chair of their committee—their task team originated in meetings held as the land invasion and eviction operation were in progress. Among themselves, settlers discussed how to "oppose the eviction"; they elected the task team to obtain external legal representation (RP1, RP2 30/10/2014). But as the land invasion progressed, problems surfaced among the settlers themselves: "the people they just builded shacks in front of others, [so] then we start to strategise, saying, we must have some committees all the stuff" (RP1 20/6/2015); "it grew from there, because it started... like neighbours problems, 'and then this neighbour did this,' 'this neighbour stole my water,' whatever" RP2 30/10/2014). By October, they had expanded their role to seeking service delivery through the ward councillor responsible for their area,

the ANC's Mzuzile Mpondwana (RP1, RP2 30/10/2014; RP2 12/1/2015; Mpondwana 8/5/2015).

In fact, the Rolihlahla land invaders had been holding meetings as early as 5/8/2014, mere days after the land occupation began, prompted by hostility from the residents at the original Marikana occupation (explained below in *Identity*; RP6, RP8 26/11/2014). At those early meetings, they chose the Rolihlahla name to distinguish themselves from the original Marikana land occupation of April 2013 (RP6 26/11/2014). So although the ongoing eviction operation was the trigger for the task team's formation, settlers held meetings about other disputes. Task team formation appeared, in this case, to be driven by two demands: the need to resolve localised disputes, and to organise a defence against hostile externals (law enforcement and a neighbouring area).

Marikana Two's grassroots governance structures originated at a meeting convened by top Ses'khona leaders in the aftermath of the 22/8/2014 eviction operation. After Loyiso Nkohla, Ses'khona secretary-general, negotiated with law enforcement agencies to call off the eviction (described in Chapter 3), he gathered the Marikana settlers at an open field between Bhekela and Marikana in the late afternoon. Finding that they were leaderless, Ses'khona leaders proposed a task team, whose task would be to set up committees to resolve disputes between neighbours. Ses'khona leaders therefore organised an election for a ten-member task team (MDF4 7/5/2015; Siyabulela 16/5/2015). In practice, people volunteered or were nominated (see discussion of elections below). Among the first matters that the Marikana task team dealt with was the legal defence of twelve Marikana settlers who had been arrested on charges of "public order violence" (Nel 22/5/2015, meeting notes 23/9/2014). Notes from September meetings of the Marikana task team show that collections of R5 were held to raise money for their bail applications. In conjunction with their mandate to organise the new settlement, they also began enumerating houses and registering owners to determine the size

of their section committees' areas (the process is discussed below, under *Enumeration and record-keeping*).

We have seen that the task teams were explicitly functional, elected with a defined mandate—for the Rolihlahla task team, to organise a defence of the settlement against eviction; and for the Marikana team, to form section committees. Both these objectives are clearly associated with the newness of the occupation—a long-established informal settlement generally does not need to defend itself against eviction or organise committees *de novo*. In practice, though, the task teams expanded their role to include the organisational practices of the street committees that residents were familiar with from other areas; this "mission creep" coincided with fresh elections and the relabeling of the teams as "section committees" or simply "committees." The justifications for the committees shifted to the need for leadership and similarities with other areas.

Indeed, it was revealing that when I asked Marikana leaders to describe the differences between their structures and those in other areas, two answers generally came up: "we're called section committees only because we don't have streets here" (pers. comm., 13/2/2015) implying that in all other respects they followed the same organisational model, or "our committee members are new, we're instructing them on their role" or "our disciplinary committee is new, we don't have cases yet" implying that as they became more established, they would resemble street committees more closely (RP2, 20/3/2015). These responses suggested that Marikana leaders took the organisational forms of the street committee as their point of departure.

The practices of the new Marikana committees were also largely, though not entirely, traceable to the existing repertoire. Some explained that the committees were established to keep order: "if there's no committee, everybody can do whatever he want. So that some of us that are doing things wrong, [the committee] can say no, guys, mustn't do it like this" (ME1,

19/3/2015). One mentioned that the "task team" would organise patrols of the new settlement, like neighbourhood watches (RP1 30/10/2014). Others talked about development of the settlement: "if there is no leader, there is no way forward" (RP6, 26/11/2014); "now that we need the services, so [the residents] elect the people [who] will go straight to the councillor" (RP1, 20/6/2015). As these answers (and OT itself) all suggest, organising in Marikana appears to have drawn on standard organisational forms and practices that were familiar to residents: keeping order, resolving disputes, and engaging externals such as the state. However, some of the committees' duties were unique to the context of a new land occupation. For instance, given the high rate of inward migration, they needed a committee to manage overcrowding—"we have to stop people coming in now. Like firstly, check that where and how we can actually put them" (RP2, 30/10/2014)—in case fire engines or ambulances had to access the interior of Marikana (ibid., MA1 & MDF2 19/3/2015). The practices and routines of Marikana's section committees in their mature form will be discussed later.

There were some explanations for committee emergence which could not be categorised as functional. Very often, I received replies like "there's no community without a leader" (MA4, 14/5/2015), or "all the places need a leader, when you attending school must have a leader, so that's the same" (MB4, 18/4/2015). Having leaders seemed to be an imperative of their communal living situation. After repeated visits, one leader (RP2) explained to me why he felt committees were necessary. As the grandson of a Xhosa clan chief, he said, street committees were the urban counterparts to the rural councils which socialised young people into the norms of the community (6/4/2015). People expected structure and hierarchy because they had been grown up acculturated into a "system of kings and clans." The link between street committees and traditional councils was also why street committees were responsible for ensuring decent behaviour, especially among young people

in the settlement. For instance, it would be within a committee member's rights to admonish a young mother who was not taking care of her child, or to tell someone to turn the volume of their speakers down to show respect to others. Committees were therefore not only responsible for harmonious living arrangements between neighbours, but possessed the moral authority to police individual behaviour. That said, many of the Marikana settlers had lived in Cape Town or other cities for many years, and conventions of urban life may have been more familiar. Nevertheless, street committees would also have been familiar organisational forms for them. As the chairperson of the Section C committee, a middle-aged man who had never previously served on a street committee, explained:

*I can say that where I'm coming from, there were the street committees. And [other residents] want to do the same here, because where they were coming from, there were [also] the street committees*

*– interview, 13/2/2015*

Finally, evidence emerged that one committee operated to enrich its own members. This was the Old Committee, which formed on 16/8/2014 in the north part of Marikana, where the Sections D and E now exist. Six people named themselves as members of a permanent committee (Marikana general meeting notes, 14/9/2014), and began selling plots to newly-arrived settlers. Accounts conflicted as to whether they had been elected or not. At least one of them had been part of the original organising team (MC4 7/5/2015). They were accused of "selling" plots of land and houses that they did not actually own, receiving R500 bribes in return for assigning plots of land (Siyabulela 16/5/2015). Moreover, they staged an arson attempt on an MDF member. This triggered violence between supporters of the MDF and the Old Committee, and they were exiled from Marikana in December 2014, universally condemned by current Marikana residents and leaders.

**Figure 4-1: A house of the "Old Committee"**



I only briefly encountered one of the "Old Committee" when, on 16/5/2015, I was brought to a mass meeting among Marikana Section E residents outside this unoccupied house. About 50 residents and committee members attended, and about 10 of them spoke up, generally middle-aged but divided evenly between men and women. There, MDF leaders were trying to mediate between the Old Committee member and residents of that section. The man was accused of selling plots, and of taking over someone else's unfinished structure without permission and completing it with a roof before selling it for his own gain (i.e., a fix-and-flip scheme). Defying the crowd, he had come only to tell them that he would his Marikana houses and material to the community, but would not admit guilt. This angered the residents, several of whom explained why they thought he was in the wrong. The meeting ended at an impasse, and he left the area again. The discussion was summarised for me by MDF3, then the acting chairperson of the Marikana Development Forum.

We have seen that the Marikana settlers began almost immediately to create grassroots governance structures in their community, starting with task teams and, slightly later, 'section' committees. Neither hypothesis set out earlier was completely supported. First, the committees did not demonstrate continuity with organisation in the land invasion phase. At least one member from the original "organising team" (later exiled) joined the Old Committee. However, the other structures were brand-new. Moreover, many prominent committee members, particularly in the Marikana Two area, had come to Marikana towards the *end* of the land invasion, not the beginning (MDF4 7/5/2015; MDF3 14/5/2015); they had heard about the land invasion second-hand, and were not involved in the planning or

preparation of it. And in the Marikana Two area, the impetus to organise certainly came from Ses'khona's intervention. Mafo Siyabulela was appointed as Ses'khona's liaison with the Marikana Two organising structures, effectively acting as a mentor and advisor: because he had started out as a resident of an informal settlement just like them in 1997, but had since obtained a house of his own with five rooms, he set himself up as an example for Marikana residents to emulate (16/5/2015). As will be seen in the section below, *Committee consolidation*, it was under Ses'khona's guidance that the structures in Marikana Two took shape (MDF4 7/5/2015; Siyabulela 16/5/2015).

Second, though the organisational forms seemed to be guided by the "culturally available" repertoire, some of their functions were specific to the context of a new informal settlement rather than guided by the repertoire of existing street committee routines. The practices of these emergent organisations came from two sources. The first set of practices could be characterised as ad-hoc responses to urgent contingencies: fighting the legal battle against the eviction and raising bail for arrested settlers. Indeed, the "task team" organisational form seems to be well-suited for these practices: they are supposed to be temporary, task-specific, and disbanded once the task is complete. However, it appears that other responsibilities were rapidly thrust upon them, through the organisational practice of the mass meeting. Problems of residential life began to emerge, partly from the continued influx of new settlers, but also as Marikana residents gained in assurance that they were going to stay and began to turn their attention towards basic needs of water, sanitation, and electricity. In the weeks and months after that, the task teams transformed into more permanent committees, taking on the familiar organisational forms and practices of the street committees.

## **Identity**

I explored why the settlers had picked the names *Marikana* (associated with violent confrontation against the state) and *Rolihlahla* (Mandela's middle name). This section presents evidence that the two names for the settlement reflected different conceptions of the relationship between the occupation and the state. While Marikana defined itself as an apolitical broad church of humble demands (technocratic service delivery) pitted against state oppression, Rolihlahla staked a claim to the memory of Mandela that suggested closer loyalty to the ANC. These name choices were associated with divided loyalties in the settlement and different modes of engagement with external actors.

Marikana, as explained in Chapter 3, was named because the evictions and their struggle against law enforcement made them identify with the miners of Marikana, Rustenburg, striking for fairer wages. In both situations, they were fired upon and oppressed by the state for standing up their rights (MC4 7/5/2015, 14/5/2015). But when the new Marikana settlers arrived in July and August 2014, residents on the old Marikana site had refused to allow them to live together with them, fearing that the new settlers would jeopardise their court case. Given the hostility of the original Marikana residents, the new settlers felt they could not adopt the same name. The Rolihlahla name was therefore chosen at a mass meeting in early August, days after they had moved in (RP8 26/11/2014, RP9 28/6/2015). Rolihlahla is Xhosa for "clearing away the bush," with the metaphorical meaning of "troublemaker." As land occupiers, they had had to clear the land for themselves (RP8 26/11/2014). But being the Xhosa middle name of the late President Mandela, it was also laden with significance. RP6 explained that by using a name other than Marikana, they hoped to signal a more cooperative stance, in the hope of getting services more quickly (26/11/2014). Initially, the Rolihlahla committee tried to advocate their name for the entirety of the new settlement. But as MC4 explained, Mandela is associated with the ANC, and since there are also DA and EFF supporters in Marikana, Marikana is the politically neutral name



(7/5/2015). Moreover, in her opinion "We're not supposed to fight for things [i.e., housing and services] by using his name."

Animosity between the two sides was sparked early on. The Marikana Two side claimed that Rolihlahla committee members began to bring "forms" around, door-to-door, "registering" people for Rolihlahla (MC4 7/5/2015; MDF3 16/5/2015). The Marikana task team stopped them, because they had not been informed. Several weeks later, the Rolihlahla Park committee chairperson convened a mass meeting of the new Marikana settlers at the main Bhekela meeting ground, and tried to propose renaming the settlement Rolihlahla Park. But this was rejected immediately (MDF4 7/5/2015). According to MC4, Marikana residents suspected that the Rolihlahla committee were out to divide and confuse the community. On MDF4's account, the meeting dispersed as the chairperson tried to explain his proposal, "because they [the residents] say, they [the Rolihlahla committee] talk rubbish"—the sentiment was that people had come to a place called "Marikana," not Rolihlahla. This early dispute over identity was left unresolved.

Rolihlahla leaders themselves tended to define themselves in contrast to the threatening Other, the Marikana Two residents under Ses'khona. With their memories of the fights between the two governance structures, they characterised Marikana Two as run by "thugs" who used offensive language and physically fought with them and the police (RP6, RP8 26/11/2014; RP2 12/1/2015). By contrast, they claimed to use reason and speak to others calmly and quietly. For their part, the Marikana Development Forum's (MDF) acting chairman made two points against the Rolihlahla committee (18/4/2015, 16/5/2015). He believed that Rolihlahla were being co-opted by the municipal government and fooled by empty promises—MDF was not convinced that the court-ordered enumeration exercise would achieve anything, pointing to the adjacent Bhekela Temporary Relocation Area whose residents had been waiting for houses in the N2 Gateway project for over a decade. He also

believed that Rolihlahla was "playing the politics of erfs," dividing the Marikana community by adopting a different name and identity. "We are weak if we are divided." (Of course, this unity was to be under MDF and Ses'khona.) Nevertheless, the two committees tried not to be implacably opposed, with leaders on both sides telling me that there was enough space for both to coexist.

The two sides also engaged in separate strategies in engaging with the municipal authorities to meet their goals. Rolihlahla cooperated more closely with the ANC ward councillor, and Marikana Two petitioned and marched against the mayor and premier. Nevertheless, because of the municipality's insistence that the court case<sup>38</sup> be resolved first before any public funds were spent on Marikana, neither strategy had delivered results at the time of writing (June 2015).

### **Committee consolidation**

Marikana's structures of grassroots governance evolved over time from task-oriented, temporary structures to permanent ones with a panoply of functions, driven primarily by residents' demands but also in accordance with the existing repertoire of organisational forms and practices. The literature documents that social movement organisations often face tensions between democratic ideals and pressures to bureaucratised. While these were present in Marikana's committees as they evolved into permanent structures, I also observed that there was resistance towards bureaucratisation which could not be categorised as democratic. Drivdal (2014, 182–84) has documented cases of informal settlement leaders in Cape Town expressing a desire for bureaucratised procedures and roles, at times quitting the leadership in their areas altogether because they are fatigued by committee duties. This suggests that in certain cases, leaders *themselves* may want to be co-opted or demobilised. Bureaucratic practices (and their counterweight, resistance or inertia among individual leaders or lower

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<sup>38</sup> It is unclear whether the authorities (other than the municipality's legal department) were aware that three separate legal cases were in play. The local police, ward councillor, and the Directorate of Human Settlements did not keep updated proactively on the cases.

levels of leadership) will be discussed below, along with the interrelation between democratic logic and legitimacy.

### *Committee membership*

Committee members come from a variety of backgrounds. Many senior members have served as ANC branch executive committee (BEC) members, as ward committee members, or as members of their street committee. Aside from this past experience, people are inducted into committees if they demonstrate skills like leadership or secretarial training, and character traits such as honesty and dignity (RP2, 20/3/2015). For instance, one committee member, a 24-year-old man was inducted as a public representative officer despite his lack of experience, because he was well-regarded as a quiet, effective mediator (ibid.). Moreover, many new members had to be instructed by more experienced members on how to handle committee work (ME1 19/3/2015, MB4 25/4/2015). According to the section E chairperson, this was, in practice, one of the main functions of committee meetings.

Most committee members, particularly the "top five" leaders (the core leadership: chairperson and secretary, their deputies, and treasurer), do not work. The task of being a committee member can be a significant burden; 73% of residents surveyed said they would not want to be committee members themselves. The open-ended responses they gave were recoded and reported in Chapter 2. Generally, most people hoped to be employed rather than volunteering for their committee, they considered themselves temperamentally unsuitable, or they thought that committee work was challenging or unsafe. According to MDF3, the acting chairperson from May 2015:

*I'm not working, no, I sacrifice my time, since 2012, when I seriously in getting myself involved in the community work. I'm not working, I'm unemployed. So I only work for the community.* – 21/5/2015

MDF4's wife had to work to support both of them and their two children; "it's only because he doesn't work that he has the time to be a committee [member]. But he's putting his

CVs everywhere" (16/5/2015). According to her, "no one will quit their job to be a committee [member]!" Many who do serve on committees talk about quitting. For instance, MC2 ran a side business selling beer, and her business was best at exactly the time that committee meetings were generally held, 5-6pm. RP2, the acting chairperson, also talked about quitting at various times, first to look for work, and then to finish an engineering course he was attending. A Rolihlahla resident told me that of her committee, "all of them want to work... so the committee [membership] changes a lot" (RP10 6/2/2015). Indeed, for Rolihlahla Park, the committee was slowly disintegrating by May 2015, because three out of the seven of them had found jobs: "I don't know what's happening to them" (RP1 pers. comm., 20/6/2015); "many of their residents want to come over, because they are standing still" (MDF3 16/5/2015). Unfortunately, it was impracticable to comprehensively survey the committee members simply because too many came and left, or professed to be "new members" who knew nothing about their job (pers. comm., 25/4/2015).

*Development from "task team" to "committee" and "development forum"*

The Rolihlahla committee became permanent when they began to engage the city council for service delivery (i.e., provision of utilities—water, sanitation, electricity—and municipal services such as household waste collection; RP1, 20/6/2015). This began in October 2014, but a new election was only held to confirm the change in the team's nature to a "committee" in January (RP2 20/3/2015).

The transition that took place in Marikana Two was more complicated. Though the Marikana task team was reconstituted as Marikana Development Forum (MDF) in November 2014, this took place against the backdrop of a leadership struggle between the task team and the Old Committee. As described above, Old Committee members were accused of corruption: they had allegedly taken bribes to assign sites in Marikana. These allegations resurfaced during a 26/10/2014 meeting. Separately, at their mass meetings, residents had

begun to push the Marikana task team to look into service delivery. For instance, discussions began with two taxi associations to add routes for Marikana residents, and committee members were planning to enforce access paths into Marikana for emergency vehicles, not allowing new arrivals to settle in them (task team meeting notes 21/10/2014). However, the Old Committee felt that their role was being threatened: "[when] we mentioned that we are responsible for development, so [the Old Committee] asked themselves, who they are in the community, then, if we are responsible for development" (MDF3 21/5/2015). The Old Committee began meeting the sanitation contractors engaged by the municipality, in an effort to get toilet facilities for their side (MDF4 7/5/2015). At the same time, they neglected their own role as a section committee. This confusion between "development forum" and "section committee" was untenable.

Matters came to a head at the end of October. At least seven meetings were held in a 13-day period from 21/10/2014 to 2/11/2014, at all levels—within the committees, Marikana-wide, and with Ses'khona leaders. Because of the corruption allegations, task team leaders proposed to resign en masse at a general meeting on 26/10/2014 to take responsibility. However, residents voted for them to stay. This caused confusion over whether the task team had been "demoted," had "resigned," or were still active; and whether their 'resignation' was a suggestion or had already taken effect. The task team itself suggested that it "might" continue its work (meeting notes 29/10/2014).

A crucial meeting was held on 29/10/2014 at Ses'khona's offices in Khayelitsha between Ses'khona leaders and Marikana task team members (meeting notes 29/10/2014). At this meeting, Mafo Siyabulela, Ses'khona's liaison with the Marikana task team, began by praising the team for helping to set up the section committees. However, he immediately turned to the accusations of corruption, which he blamed on 'gossip' and considered poorly dealt with at the mass meeting three days prior. His fear was that "now that the task team has

stepped down the whole Marikana will be based on corruption." Instead, he proposed that the task team should change its name to "Marikana Development Forum," reflecting a new focus on the "development" of the Marikana area. At a mass meeting three days later, the procedure was formalised: MDF members would be elected by a meeting of section committee members. The importance of communication between all levels was re-emphasised. No mention was made of the allegations of "corruption"; but this surfaced again as a source of conflict in Marikana just weeks later in December 2014 (see section below, *Approval and legitimacy*).

This incident shows the extent to which Ses'khona leaders, Siyabulela in particular, shaped the course of the MDF. Not only did they constitute the Marikana Task Team, they presided over its transformation into the MDF. Crucial decisions were taken at Ses'khona's offices at Blue Hall, Khayelitsha, violating the convention (which had held since the beginning among Marikana Two leaders<sup>39</sup>) that community decisions ought to be taken at the open field next to Bhekela. With his status as a long-time community activist and organiser—who had successfully "brought development" to his own informal settlement, Kosovo—Siyabulela nudged the Marikana Two leadership in a new direction (now prioritising "development" over "organisation-building"). He implicitly favoured one group over the other, while temporarily leaving aside the allegations of corruption that had caused the crisis.

Following that, MDF registered as a non-profit organisation on 19/12/2014. MDF2 explained to me that official registration gave them legitimacy, increasing their leverage and legitimacy against other groups:

*When people turn violent, we need to be able to control them. If we are not registered, we are the same, we are ordinary like them, and we can't control them, because they won't listen to us.*  
– 22/5/2015

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<sup>39</sup> This convention was used against the Rolihlahla Park committee, which had proposed a name change but was opposed by residents in the Marikana Two area. The requirement to hold meetings in the field next to Bhekela can be thought of as a sort of "publicity check": to ensure decisions are taken democratically, they must be made known openly in a designated space.

## **Hierarchisation**

The Marikana Two and Rolihlahla committees developed a formal structure and were shaped by external influences and practices, though this was more evident in Marikana Two. The Rolihlahla committee, totalling about 18–20 members, had two tiers of membership: "board members" or a "top six," who occupied defined roles such as chairperson and secretary; and "additional members" who were scattered throughout the area and helped to resolve small disputes between neighbours in their immediate vicinity (RP9 6/3/2015). The division between core and additional members was common to all the Marikana committees I interviewed, and was explained as a common organisational practice in SANCO and street committees in other areas (RP2 20/3/2015; MDF4 7/5/2015).

The larger Marikana Two area developed a hierarchy of five section committees that reported to a top-level committee, the MDF, the successor to the Marikana task team. Each section committee was supposed to have 12–15 members at full strength. Committee members characterised the MDF above them as "playing that role of SANCO" (MC1 13/2/2015): MDF had the same relationship to the section committees as a SANCO area branch might have with its street committees. In addition, the MDF Women's League member was formerly a member of the Khayelitsha Development Forum's women's league, and MDF members based their roles on their understanding of what the KDF did (MDF2 19/3/2015). Therefore, besides a "top five" of chairperson, vice-chair, secretary, deputy secretary, and treasurer, they had positions such as "women's league," "organiser," "safety and security," and "sports and youth," all consciously adopted from the KDF organisational template. That said, most of the positions were not filled; committee member turnover was a chronic problem at all levels. The section E chairperson told me that he handled section affairs with three other colleagues, though he thought that this was adequate (ME1 19/3/2015).

MDF had a centralised decision-making style, in which their section committees acted as the middlemen between them and the residents:

*MDF as I told you, they just give you the orders, and then we have to take those orders to the community. So the community is disagree with us, yebo? so we have to take it back to MDF, to say no, the community is disagree with us. Yeah, we have to do that.*  
– interview, 13/2/2015

Initiatives affecting the whole community would be decided at meetings between the MDF leadership and representatives from the section committees, who would bring these back to their committees and residents for feedback. At a committee meeting I attended (28/4/2015), examples of these were a proposal to limit the Marikana shebeens' trading hours to 10pm, in line with other neighbourhoods; and a dispute between a pastor and the landlord of his chapel, who had allegedly sold the property to another party without notifying the pastor. The latter turned into a discussion about whether property transactions ought to be allowed Marikana-wide. This pattern of top-down dissemination and bottom-up feedback was facilitated by the weekly schedule of meetings Marikana Two held. Tuesday evenings were reserved for meetings between the MDF and section committee representatives; Wednesday evenings for sections; and Sunday afternoons for mass meetings for all Marikana Two residents. That said, they did not keep the schedule perfectly: sections held their meetings irregularly when the need arose, and as the section E chairperson observed, "sometimes very hard to call the meeting in the sections, because some of them, they are tired to be in a meeting" (19/3/2015).

Thus, MDF adopted the SANCO model to structure its relations with its section committees, and the Khayelitsha Development Forum template to structure its role. MDF and its committees maintained a strict reporting hierarchy between the Forum, the committees, and their constituents. Rolihlahla was less stratified but also adopted SANCO's organisational practice of distinguishing between core and additional members.

### **Enumeration and record-keeping**



Besides adopting a stratified structure, registering as a non-profit, and assigning roles among themselves, Marikana Two also adopted other bureaucratic practices. They maintained registers, meeting minutes, and took attendance at meetings. Minutes were handwritten at first, but in January 2015, one of the leaders began to take minutes on his laptop (pers. comm. 22/5/2015). Meetings were supposed to be compulsory for committee members (MC1 13/2/2015). Detailed attendance rosters were kept both at closed-door meetings within the MDF and committee and at section meetings with ordinary residents.

Marikana Two also enumerated the houses under their charge—which triggered conflict with the Rolihlahla area (discussed below). The Rolihlahla committee did not assign numbers themselves, because on the advice of a local activist and paralegal (A2), they waited for the City of Cape Town to enumerate their houses as mandated by the Western Cape High Court. This took place in a two-month stretch from the end of January till the end of March. Some residents, not fully informed of the legal process, believed that the enumeration exercise meant that they would soon get houses as well; this fostered a sense of progress.

However, the Marikana task team lost no time in numbering the houses under them—beginning just a week after they were elected (MDF3, 21/5/2015). They were painted "M" for Marikana, four digits, and then a letter from A to E indicating the section they were in (see Figure 5-1 for an example, house M1787E). This was done to document claims on houses and plots in case of disputes, to be able to cite better data when representing Marikana to officials and NGOs, to demarcate the sections, and to determine (or stake a claim to) the "boundary" with the Rolihlahla committee which was west of section C. Organisationally, enumeration was done to decide how best to split Marikana into sections to be governed. Marikana Two engaged in active debate over this, proposing initially to split into 4 sections of 50–100 houses each (mass meeting notes 31/8/2014; this seriously underestimated the scale of their own land invasion). This was later expanded to around 1400–1500 per section,

striking a balance between having too many committee members, and having unmanageably-large sections. By any standard the task team demonstrated significant organisational capacity. Merely two weeks after they had been elected, they had numbered the first 1400 houses (task team meeting notes, 6/9/2014). However, the enumeration stalled in the north half of Marikana (Sections D and E) which was the Old Committee's territory at that time. These sections only received numbers in March and April. Enumeration also provoked a dispute with Rolihlahla at the interface between the two sides.

### **Conflict between Rolihlahla and Marikana Two**

In November 2014, confrontation erupted between Marikana Two and Rolihlahla Park. Rolihlahla committee members had been painting numbers on houses ("149," referring to the erf number) in the area that Marikana Two considered as their own. Marikana Two retaliated by seizing their paint supplies. They negotiated a deal to return the paint and brushes, but instead of sending their leaders, as agreed, Rolihlahla came with their "entire community" on 18/11/2014 (MC4 7/5/2015). Marikana Two interpreted this as Rolihlahla Park spoiling for a fight, and responded in force with their own people. As a result of the fight, the vice-chairperson of the Rolihlahla committee lost his house and spent several days hospitalised. This reinforced Rolihlahla's fears of the Marikana Two side. From then on, Rolihlahla committee members refused to go beyond an unofficial boundary in the settlement, and advised me not to do so either as they could not guarantee my safety.

Nevertheless, leaders on both sides were keen to play down the quarrel. The leader who had been assaulted tried to explain it away, saying that "when you don't have much, you fight over even the little, little things" (RP2 13/1/2015). On MDF's part, they insisted "we do not have a problem with them" (MDF3 21/5/2015), and pointed out that both sides were cooperating in their efforts to engage the ward councillor, holding joint meetings from the beginning of the year (MDF1 19/3/2015).

The Marikana Two–Rolihlahla rivalry was connected to deeper animosities and suspicions which I had no chance to explore fully. Underlying them is an internal rivalry in the regional ANC and SANCO structures in Cape Town. SANCO has endured a leadership split at the national level since its conference in January 2014 (SABC 2014), and the regional SANCO structure has fractured along the same lines (A4 16/4/2015). The Ward 35 councillor since February 2014, Mzuzile Mpondwana of the ANC, has also been linked to a split in the local SANCO leadership in Gugulethu (MDF3 21/5/2015). According to the Marikana Two leadership, some of the Rolihlahla committee members, whom my informants refused to name, were part of a new SANCO leadership faction in Barcelona, an older informal settlement in Gugulethu. Mpondwana (then an ANC branch chairperson) had helped to register them and purge the old leadership from SANCO's records. They began working closely from then (pers. comm. 21/5/2015).

Ses'khona's secretary-general Loyiso Nkohlhla (formerly an ANC ward councillor himself) also reinforced the allegations against Rolihlahla by cautioning against a certain committee member there. Rolihlahla committee members on their part considered Ses'khona a "cancer of the ANC" and condemned them for offering "empty promises" of jobs with the rail operator PRASA (cf. Isaac 2014). They see themselves as the original committee of the 2014 Marikana settlers, and the MDF as a splinter faction within Marikana. They also consult closely with Mpondwana "as we are all ANC members," though the content of these discussions was not revealed (RP9 28/6/2015). Nevertheless, despite these consultations another Rolihlahla leader admitted that he did not see progress on the residents' demands (pers. comm. 7/5/2015).

But because I was an outsider with no contextual knowledge and informants were reluctant to offer any specifics, it was difficult to get my informants to reveal the full import of these details. The allegations against Mpondwana and Rolihlahla leaders—which were

never explicitly spelt out, merely spoken about—had a history which predated Marikana and stretched to other informal settlements. But what is clear that these *perceptions* of higher-level regional ANC and SANCO splits do have lasting consequences for local leadership, who allow these loyalties to inform their working relations with other local leaders.

### **Resistance to bureaucratisation**

Bureaucratisation was resisted both internally in the MDF, as well as from the section committees. Though some among the MDF leadership to "professionalise" their work, this caused a rift within the committee. In fact, the first MDF chairperson quit because he wanted other MDF leaders to treat it as a full-time job, but others saw themselves only as volunteers (MDF2, 19/3/2015). MDF4 explained:

*He wanted to be our boss... but we've got our problems of our own, you see? So we must attend [to] our problems. Like me I've got children, so if I'm here, and their schools call me, then I must go there, you see. He's working, but [when] he get an off [day], immediately he'll call a meeting. But we got our [designated] time to have a meeting, like Tuesday... him, he just call us. – interview, 7/5/2015*

MDF members and section committee members sometimes described themselves as a "collective team" with no distinction between MDF and section committees—merely a division of labour (MA2, 14/5/2015). However, other section committee members admitted to friction between the two levels on both procedural and substantive matters. For instance, MDF held weekly meetings between them and the section committees, at which they took attendance. They fined section committee members a R10 penalty if they were absent without reason (pers. comm., 13/2/2015). The element of enforceability is consequential, as it indicates a reporting hierarchy. Proposals from the top leadership could also cause friction when some committee members felt that MDF initiatives were difficult to implement in practice (pers. comm., 13/2/2015). For instance, MDF decided that Marikana was overcrowded and no new hokkies could be accommodated, in order to maintain access paths

for emergency vehicles. However, section committee members complained that it was difficult to enforce the restriction against newcomers who insisted on having their own way.

I also found that interpersonal relationships between different levels of Marikana Two leadership could be distanced, if not exactly strained. It was hard to persuade section committee members to put me in touch with MDF members, and when they finally did so they cautioned me not to reveal that they were the source of the contact details. The same thing happened when I asked MDF members for a contact number for Siyabulela, whom they appeared to treat as part advisor, part *supervisor*.

As shown above, the bureaucratisation tendency predicted in organisational theory was found in Marikana. Some of the practices they adopted—enumerating houses and keeping registers—were for functional efficiency rather than legitimation. Enforcing fines and chains of command and reporting also served control purposes. On the other hand, bureaucratisation caused dissatisfaction among section committee members responsible for implementing policies announced from the top, and among all members who felt that as volunteers their duties should not be too onerous or leave them out of pocket.

### *Approval and legitimacy*

Some organisational theorists argue that organising takes place not for efficiency but for legitimacy. The practices of Marikana's governance structures revealed how approval and legitimacy were constructed. Two primary sources of legitimacy were elections and day-to-day performance, and committees could lose approval by being perceived as useless or corrupt. Rival structures might also accuse each other of being undemocratic, or not having derived legitimacy from the right constituency.

A primary source of legitimacy was participatory democracy. According to Siyabulela, the Ses'khona liaison to Marikana, elections are necessary because holding elections is a convention of democracy, and it is important to be accountable to one's

constituency (16/5/2015). Drivdal (2014, 172–73) describes an ideal case of elections in Egoli informal settlement, in a farming zone on the western edge of Philippi—she reads it as an exercise in promoting unity in the community. But she also notes that many elections have low turnout and sometimes simply serve to legitimate self-appointed leaders (ibid., 148).

Due to time and resource constraints among Marikana's leaders and the pressing need for leadership, elections were often overlooked, and when they were conducted the procedural requirements were rather lax. The Marikana task team was described in this rather contradictory manner: "The Task Team, they were volunteer[s], and also other people elected them" (Siybulela 16/5/2015). This suggests a loose meaning of the word 'election'. Unlike in Egoli, Marikana settlers did not know each other well. So at the election on 22/8/2014, they simply nominated their leaders, who were then expected to prove themselves, as MDF4 explained (7/5/2015):

- MDF4: So the people, they elect us, but we didn't know each other. Because we were new, mus. You see? But the people I don't know which criteria they used, but they elect us, you see?*
- Interviewer: So how did they elect you? Did they say, did someone just shout out a name, and then after that, show hands?*
- MDF4: They didn't even know our name, they just point! (Laughs) This guy, yeah, I elect this guy. [...]*
- I: Did they say why [they nominated you]?*
- MDF4: No, we didn't ask why.*
- I: So they just pushed you to the front?*
- MDF4: Yeah (laughs) you see, they didn't ask why, why are you electing this guy. So you're going to show yourself, if you are elected, are you willing to work for the community, after that.*

Elections do not always happen, and not all committee members are elected. Secretaries, for instance, could be inducted because they "liked writing" (pers. comm., 19/3/2015, 25/4/2015). Marikana's E-section committee was nominated "in a rush" in early January 2015 when the Old Committee was exiled, leaving a power vacuum. According to their chairperson, "we elected anybody who want to be a part of the committee" (ME1 19/3/2015). Even the chairperson positions could be filled without elections. When the

inaugural MDF chairperson quit, the election was postponed several times (at least once because Siyabulela was not available to conduct the election; pers. comm. 24/3/2015) and eventually abandoned. The acting chairperson (MDF3, actually the second substitute in a row) assumed the role by common consent: "we haven't had the election, but everyone has him in mind for that role" (MDF2 pers. comm., 4/5/2015). Other committee members, particularly the "additional members", were simply inducted into the committee if there was a vacancy or if they were thought to have necessary skills and initiative (RP2, 12/11/2014, 20/3/2015; MB4, 25/4/2015). This means that new committee members can be drafted in two ways: elections (which are essentially nomination-confirmation processes, as the quotes from ME1 and Siyabulela, above, suggest), and by co-optation.

Claims of being elected were used to back up claims to lead Marikana, while rival committees were accused of not being elected, or being elected only on their home turf and yet trying to expand their influence. For instance, RP9 argued that MDF was being unreasonable by wanting to "rule over us" (i.e., oversee their activities) even though the Rolihlahla residents had not participated in the mass meeting on 22/8/2014 that had elected them (6/3/2015). Similarly, ME1 asserted that the Old Committee had not been elected—unlike his own street committee, which according to him was chosen in a mass meeting involving the entire community (ME1 14/3/2015). He presented the extreme response of exiling them and burning their houses as justified partly because they were unelected. Renaming the community "Rolihlahla Park," which RP6 advocated, was also seen by Marikana Two as undemocratic—"decisions must be taken at the field, because that's where the community meets" (MDF3)—even though it was a decision which was backed in RP6's own mass meeting. Both sides accused the other of trying to "rule over" them without having a mandate from their own people—in other words, asserting that leadership over people who had not elected them would be illegitimate.

Committees do not enjoy unlimited stores of internal legitimacy either. Since Marikana settlers came from many different townships in Cape Town, few residents had strong ties with their committee members, with 70% not being able to name a single committee member by name. Committee members had no track record to fall back on. Therefore, residents evaluated their leaders based on their work in Marikana—performance legitimacy. As the quote from MDF4 above suggests, leaders would be assessed on their merits after they were elected—whether they would "work for the community." Though most residents (77%) thought that their committees were helping them, some disagreed: a young single mother reported that her committee had not helped to mediate with her neighbour, who was dumping household waste next to her hokkie, attracting vermin (pers. comm. 21/3/2015). Two residents in a different section claimed their committee was useless at combatting crime, and they only trusted the Economic Freedom Fighters,<sup>40</sup> a new political party, rather than the Ses'khona-linked MDF. Other residents reportedly feared their committee members, having heard that they had burnt the houses of people who disagreed with them (as discussed in Chapter 2).

Committees could lose their legitimacy through corrupt practices—variously described as "taking bribes" or "selling land" though these amounted to the same thing. It was not long after the MDF's formation in early November 2014 that residents and leaders in the Marikana Two area finally decided to exile the Old Committee. The allegations against them were of the same nature as before, but the trigger for confrontation was that Old Committee members had petrol-bombed an MDF member's hokkie in the early morning of 22/12/2014. In retaliation, they organised Marikana Two residents to exile the Old Committee. The Old Committee leadership fled to the Philippi East police station on 22/12/2014, where they were sheltered while police, the ward councillor, and Ses'khona attempted to negotiate a way for

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<sup>40</sup> There was no indication that EFF was actually active in Marikana



them to return to Marikana. Negotiations stalled as MDF leaders claimed that they were willing to have the Old Committee return (despite the attack), but the community would not agree. This ended the Old Committee's presence in Marikana.

More gradually, committees could lose their mandate through repeated confrontations with hostile neighbours. This was the case in Rolihlahla in May 2015: RP9, the Rolihlahla committee's organiser, explained in a phone interview that he had left Marikana entirely in mid-May because of disputes with his neighbours (28/6/2015). According to him, neighbours of his had destroyed his business, a braai (barbecue) stand along Sheffield Road. They stirred up petty confrontations about smoke from his stand, and were also jealous of his arrangement to buy electricity and water from a homeowner across the road. Matters escalated, and one day the woman living behind his stand brought a group of her friends to demolish his stand. Though the committee convened a mass meeting to consult the entire community on what to do next, the woman and her supporters stayed away from that meeting. To those in attendance, this 'proved' that they were guilty. Nevertheless, he decided that this "jealousy" was too much to deal with, and moved away. The rest of the Rolihlahla committee also began to doubt their mandate, given that the faction had not accepted their mediation attempt, and they planned to hold fresh elections.

### **Practices of grassroots governance in Marikana**

As discussed earlier in the chapter, the literature documents several functions that street committees have undertaken: resolving disputes, dispensing informal justice and providing public order, and negotiating or mediating with external organisations and the state. Both the MDF and Rolihlahla committee undertook these functions. But as documented earlier, these functions were only assumed after some time, as the settlers were first of all concerned with the immediate threat of eviction, and then with lobbying the government for service provision. Without a comprehensive study of street committee practices in other areas,

it is difficult to say whether those in Marikana were any different. However, in one area—managing land in the settlement—the committees all took on a proactive enforcement role that was perhaps a product of their unique context, as a recent land occupation undergoing consolidation.

Below, I first explore how the routines and practices were chosen or decided on. I then illustrate the Marikana committees' practices, focusing on those that were unique to the context of a new land occupation. Lastly, I turn to the strategies that they used to engage with external players, and some of the possible influences on that strategy.

### *Marikana leaders' goals*

Expecting that communal goals would have some link to the organisational practices that had emerged, I asked committee members to describe the goals they, as leaders, had for Marikana. According to the section B committee chairperson, they wanted "to make everything nice": controlling crime, stopping fights and keeping the peace (25/4/2015). Those from the MDF, oriented towards achieving development for Marikana, painted pictures of roads, street lights, schools, clinics, community halls, playgrounds (MDF4, 7/5/2015) and the "beautiful flats that you see at Langa" (i.e., the N2 Gateway housing project; MDF3, 14/5/2015).

But for others, their goals were driven by what the residents wanted. According to the section E chairperson:

*No, it's not depend on the chairperson. It's depend on the people of the section, the residents... Chairperson, we like to have this and this and this. [...] As a chairperson it's not that I have the power to say to the people, guys, I want to do this. No, it's not depend on me [...] This is not my section. It's our section. So everybody in this section can have the power, he can have the vision of the section.*  
— interview 19/3/2015

MDF4, an MDF member, explained that the MDF came to focus on services because of demand from their constituents (7/5/2015). At a meeting in November, it was suggested

that they should have a one-year mandate to obtain toilets and water, after which fresh elections would be held.

Besides basic services and other marks of material well-being that their constituents demanded, Marikana leaders also had their concerns about the "image" of their community. Speaking to me several weeks after the looting of Somali shops, the section B chairperson shared his concerns: he was afraid that media reports on the incident had created the impression that Marikana was unsafe and violent, that there was "a bad image of Marikana, just fighting," and that "no one will want to come and help" (25/4/2015). MDF4 shared those concerns:

*MDF4: [...] Maybe [if] somebody want to help us, they're scared.  
Interviewer: Outsiders?  
MDF4: Yeah, they scared to come! (laughs) to us, because... even in the taxis, the buses, the trains, they talk about Marikana [...] That's why we want to change this thing. They talk bad about us.  
– interview 7/5/2015*

MDF4 was also worried that Marikana was gaining a reputation for vigilante justice and criminality. This, he said, originated in the August 2014 land invasion, when some of the new settlers had broken into shops along Stock Road adjoining the Marikana area. But it was reinforced by the vigilantism that some Marikana residents were resorting to:

*MDF4: As you know, Marikana image, we want to change that image. Most of the people, they don't want to come here, they say we're monsters, something like that.  
Interviewer: Why do they say that?  
MDF4: Oh, it's because of the situation, people are killing people. So, if you rob somebody, people will kill you immediately, and they will burn you, you see? So we want to change this, and we want to be like other communities. [...] Yeah, you can say [the perception now is] it's rule by the gangsters, because our mission was not to loot the shops. It's the criminals who do those things.  
– interview 7/5/2015*

According to him, the solution was to build unity in Marikana. With unity in purpose, Marikana residents would be able to meet their demands by demonstrating peacefully, without hurting their cause by robbing businesses or damaging property:

*If we go to the marches, we as Marikana must talk the same language. If we go there, we must go there, you know, we are not going there to loot or to burn the shops. [...] So that's why we want to unite the people. As I've said to you, there's those guys, when we go to march sometimes, they, they are thugs mus, criminals. [...] Yeah, when we talk about march, they think about to loot, or to rob people, you know. But if go there to march, we are not going there to loot shops, or you know, rob people. We just go there for our mission, maybe if we want water, just go there to the water service, you see?*

These were their aspirations: to control crime, achieve basic service provision within the first year of the MDF's formation, and in the long term attain material progress. But they also had less tangible goals, concerning image, identity, and unity. Leaders could, and did, have their own vision, but they emphasised that decisions were only implemented by popular demand from the community, through mass meetings.

#### *Internal ordering: justice and dispute resolution*

Informal criminal justice and vigilantism has been a constant feature of South Africa's townships and informal settlements for generations (Burman and Schärf 1990; Minnaar 2001; Lee and Seekings 2002; Runciman 2014). However, Marikana leaders I spoke to universally condemned vigilante justice, because "street justice is not justice" (RP2, 20/3/2015); vigilantism harmed innocents through false allegations and gave Marikana a reputation for violence (MB4 25/4/2015; MA1 19/3/2015; MDF4 7/5/2015). They felt it harmed Marikana's image (as discussed earlier). Leaders sought to maintain proper procedures: hearing both sides and not relying on hearsay (MA1, interview 19/3/2015). These procedures were important because vigilantism could be used against innocents; section committees therefore had to proactively intervene to enforce their justice:

*Interviewer: Have people been punished before?*

*MA1: Before, that committees... it was uh, the people yeah they was punished! They was punished, because I remember one guy, he*

- was suspected to rape, ne, then the people take the law to their own hands. They hit that person, then they killed that person.*
- MDF2: And he didn't even rape.*
- MA1: See? Only to find out that person he didn't rape. But he... her, I don't know, her sister, sister in law, auntie...*
- MDF2: She was buying a [insurance] policy.*
- MA1: Yeah, she was... need something...money from the policy ne? So then she just make a plan that she, okay if this one can be killed, I can get money on his side. [...] So it's where people decided that no, it must be committees, then the committees they must look after those cases like that one. [...] So before we do anything else, must take that person, and sit with him here, and then we ask him until we get real information. Without hitting him or killing him.*
- Interviewer: So it's from that case that you decided... that you must have committees?*
- MA1: Yeah, yeah because we learnt something. That the people they're going to kill a lot of people if we can't sit down and solve the problem ourselves. – interview 19/3/2015*

Nevertheless, even if section committees do wish to stop vigilante justice, they may be unable to restrain the residents. A middle-aged man told me about a suspected rape-murder; according to him, there was "no time for process, because [the people] were angry. Community leaders tried to stop it, to intervene, but the community was angry" (25/4/2015). Siyabulela, Ses'khona's Chief Organiser, concurred: "the spirit is very high here [in Marikana]," because residents had "fresh blood" unlike those in more settled communities that he has worked in (16/5/2015).

Marikana's section committees considered dispensing justice to be one of their main tasks, because if not residents would enact mob justice on their own, punishing innocents and giving the place a bad reputation. Another reason why they did so is that early in Marikana's development, police were reluctant to enter the new land occupation. Since the police were associated with the ALIU's eviction operations, there was a real danger that they would be stoned (Sibidla 2015). Warrant Officer Sibidla of Philippi East SAPS took it on himself to reach out to the community, and SAPS officers began holding regular meetings, much like residents in the other areas. In Marikana, there is now an understanding between police and

the street committees: Marikana residents have to report crimes and disputes to street committee members before they go to the police (ME3, 25/4/2015). The committee will then write a report, certifying that they have been notified, which the complainant will take to the police. In this way, committees operate similarly to Community Policing Forums (Tshehla 2002).

However, only more serious disputes got handed over to the SAPS: for instance, rape or murder cases (MDF2 19/3/2015; ME3 25/4/2015), or the allegations of plot-selling against the Old Committee (the first time Marikana committee members engaged with the police; Sibidla 2015). Moreover, I was told that SAPS would still not go into the settlement; if people wanted a case investigated, they would have to bring the other party along with them to the police station (6/4/2015; RP9 28/6/2015). This effectively made disputes impossible to settle through SAPS, since accused persons would hardly be taken willingly to the police station. Rather, less serious disputes were handled internally.

Order involved more than just dealing with crime and meting out punishment. Committees were expected to resolve quarrels between neighbours, family, or even partners. The dumping of wastewater, food waste, or human waste was a common problem that committees dealt with, and was cited by almost everyone. Other "petty things" that committees mediated included physical fights, verbal abuse, and stealing (RP2 20/3/2015; MB4 25/4/2015). Love cases apparently formed a major part of their caseload (*ibid.*), and some committee members took it upon themselves to give relationship advice and more (ME1 19/3/2015). This was perhaps indicative of RP2's conception of the committees as offering moral guidance to residents.

Given that Marikana settlers had only recently staked claims to their sites, disputes over property or allocation of land were another important subset of committee work. Some were fairly simple: for instance, I observed the section B chairperson mediating between a

large shop selling construction material and furniture, and a young couple who wanted to set up a vegetable stand (25/4/2015). Since the furniture store was occupying far more space, the chairperson persuaded them to make room for the newcomer—reminding them that they had all come to Marikana in search of space. But property disputes could also be overlaid with complicating elements, such as relationship dramas: in Rolihlahla, the committee resolved a messy breakup between a cohabiting couple by ordering them to physically split their hokkie into two separate structures—warning them that otherwise, one of them would have to leave Marikana and lose their claim on any future development or relocation (A2 16/2/2015). This resolution suggests that sometimes, Marikana's unique status as an informal settlement awaiting infrastructural upgrades was a factor to consider when resolving disputes.

Committees also monitored empty houses. As explained in Chapter 3, some viewed Marikana as an investment, a step up the ladder of self-improvement. But a consequence was speculative building, in which people claimed sites or built structures that they then left derelict. This is not unique to Marikana: Skuse and Cousins (2007, 987) briefly mention that some early claimants in Enkanini, Khayelitsha, were actually homeowners in nearby Makhaza and Kuyasa, though they do not explain (1) why homeowners would want to stake a claim in a new land occupation or (2) whether the new settlers took any action against them. In Marikana, speculative builders did so to lay claim to a house in future, should Marikana be upgraded or relocated. I met a couple (5/2/2015) who rented a formal house in Lower Crossroads, across the road from Marikana, but who built a hokkie in Marikana section B in late August, at the time of the land invasion. They had to stay in Lower Crossroads for the health and safety of their young children, but hoped to get a house of their own through Marikana. A friend of the wife's brother was living in their Marikana hokkie rent-free to maintain their claim.

Marikana residents objected to the unoccupied structures. First, they were unhappy that others would freeload off their efforts (ME1 19/3/2015, ME3 25/4/2015). They had successfully fought the ALIU and now faced the daily struggles of material deprivation, fetching water with buckets and digging holes for their waste, so it was unfair that others could stake a claim in Marikana and then go back to their rented houses with proper services. They were also concerned that shell structures would become hideouts for thieves. And they felt that the spaces should go to people with "genuine need for the land, those who are actually going to live on it" (pers. comm. 13/1/2015).

In practice, these cases were usually resolved by the owners coming to stay in the house or placing a friend or relative there to hold their place (as in the case of the couple described above). In other cases, residents made moves to demolish these empty houses. Section committees sometimes managed to stop them, but not always (ME1, MA1 19/3/2015). On the committees' part, they would try to contact the owner through friends living in Marikana, and ask them to return; committee members I probed on the issue reported no problems getting them to come back. One of the section chairpersons admitted that it was not a priority, and that (at the time of the interview) they had not torn down any houses.

#### *Internal efforts at development*

As explained earlier, the MDF began life with the mandate to seek development by engaging with the municipal government. Over time, though, its ambit expanded, and it took on Marikana-wide decision-making powers that would normally be exercised by an area committee. Among the proposals they discussed were the need to control newcomers into Marikana and keep access paths open for vehicles; whether or not property transactions should be allowed, and what procedure should be followed; closing Marikana's shebeens at 10pm; bringing in contractors to elevate a low-lying area for the construction of a communal hall; and of course, permission for my work in the settlement. These were all issues of a



geographical scope beyond a single section, and therefore ended up being discussed at the MDF's meetings. The list above clearly shows that significant efforts were being made even independently of the state to provide internal order and grassroots governance.

Separately from their committees' efforts, many residents put their initiative, entrepreneurship and skills to good use. People on casual work, sensing a need in the community, decided to stop working and run spaza shops and food stands instead (RP9, RP10). Experienced and trained childcare teachers who had moved to Marikana set up crèches for young children in their community (pers. comm. 23/4/2015). They accepted the irregular payments parents could provide, taking some children in for free: "they are here because they can't pay rent, after all." Though there certainly were individual benefits involved, these residents tended to frame their motivations in communitarian terms.

Likewise, some sanitation and water access was provided communally, through more entrepreneurial arrangements. I found three cases where residents had taken it upon themselves to build taps and pit latrines (outhouses). They collected money from others in the vicinity to buy pipes or shack materials for the latrines. For the taps, more technically-skilled residents started digging in areas they suspected might have pipes (along the side of Protea Road and Lanzerac Road, two tarred roads running through the Marikana area). Once they hit municipal water pipes, they laid their own pipes to the location of the communal tap (pers. comm. 24/4/2015, 25/4/2015). Pit latrines required less expertise; however, they were padlocked, so the residents who had contributed could control access to the toilets (21/5/2015; see Figure 4-2). These projects were initiated without the involvement of the MDF; only in one of the pipe-laying projects was the section committee involved. As for rubbish, piles simply gathered alongside Sheffield Road (see Figure 4-3).

**Figure 4-2: Pit latrines, a communal project in Marikana**



With no toilets, most (about three-quarters) of Marikana residents either used pit latrines that they had built or went to the bush to relieve themselves. This part of Marikana was particularly unfortunate as the only convenient area they could use was the burial ground of the Klipfontein residents, causing tension between the two communities early on (though this had ebbed). According to a resident I spoke to (21/5/2015), it was unsafe for women and children to go to the graveyard at night because several rapes and murders had been reported there. Therefore, people in the area made a collection from nearby households to buy material and build these pit latrines. A padlock and short chain can be seen on the door on the right; keys were held by a few nearby households. (Photo taken 21/5/2015)

**Figure 4-3: Household waste accumulated along Sheffield Road**



Piles of household waste began to accumulate along Sheffield Road from December 2014. Trash was reportedly cleared only two or three times between December 2014 and June 2015. Coils of barbed wire on the left of the photograph are the remnants of the police operation to control the violence between the Marikana and Lower Crossroads areas. The police presence was withdrawn on 18/6/2015, two-and-a-half weeks after the violence. (Photo taken 20/6/2015)

I asked an MDF leader why they were not organising community projects like communally-designated rubbish dumps and toilet facilities (MDF2 pers. comm. 22/5/2015). Though they had not discussed this in their meetings, she noted that these could generate conflict, since everyone would want taps near to them and toilets and trash far away. "If only the City can provide us with bags, like they do in the other informal settlements," she mused, referring to the weekly household waste collection services that the municipality runs in these areas. Similarly a Rolihlahla committee member agreed that it was a problem, and in fact, their committee's secretary had suggested hiring a truck to provide a weekly removal service. But the majority opinion in the committee was that if the City was going to do it anyway, their efforts should be directed towards getting the municipality to provide the service rather

than to privately duplicate the municipality's work. This suggested a dependence on the state for essential services.

### *External non-state engagement*

Of course, that is not to say that Marikana only reached out to the municipal government: Rolihlahla and Marikana Two engaged externally right from the evictions. Calls went out to independent local activists as well as people affiliated with Abahlali baseMjondolo and Ses'khona.<sup>41</sup> When ALIU started a major operation on 22/8/2014, Abahlali was uncontactable, so the Marikana Two settlers made contact with Ses'khona through local activist contacts (MC4 14/5/2015). As documented in Chapter 3, Ses'khona leaders successfully intervened to halt the eviction by pointing out that the basis for the eviction was a draft court order. They (particularly Siyabulela) proceeded to guide the development of grassroots governance structures in Marikana Two, advising on the creation of the Marikana Development Forum and on MDF elections.

Like MDF's Ses'khona liaison, Rolihlahla had an external advisor, A2, a trained paralegal and community activist in his 50s. Unlike Siyabulela, however, A2 kept his advice to legal matters, saying that these had to be sorted before anything else could proceed (16/2/2015). Individual Rolihlahla committee members also expressed the wish to work with various national-level bodies, such as Abahlali baseMjondolo (RP2 12/11/2014) and SANCO (RP9 6/3/2015), because they believed these organisations would be able to bring them resources and contacts which would facilitate achieving their goals. However, according to RP2, then the acting chairperson, they were waiting for SANCO to recognise them as a committee (20/3/2015). They made no progress on this front.

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<sup>41</sup> I probed and prompted Marikana informants to find out if the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign had ever been approached. None of them had even heard of it. This accords with Sims (2015)—Director: Urbanisation in the Directorate of Human Settlements (DHS): Informal Settlements—who says that the last she had heard of them was in 2009 or 2010; if they were engaging with government at all, she would be the first in DHS to know. S'bu Zikode, leader of Abahlali baseMjondolo, also said in a 2014 interview that the WC-AEC "basically fell apart two years ago" (Tshabalala 2014).

Other non-state actors involved in Marikana included the nearby businesses. According to the City's land-use plan, the Marikana land is designated for retail and warehousing activities. There is a stretch of supermarkets along Stock Road, on the west edge of Marikana. Those supermarkets had been looted during the August 2014 eviction, and were reportedly eager to make contact with local leaders to prevent a repeat of the looting (MDF1, MDF2 19/3/2015). MDF often lobbied them for food parcels; Cash and Carry also provided sports kit for a youth soccer league in Marikana (MDF2 24/4/2015).

### *Engagement with the state*

Over the last week of May 2015, Marikana residents engaged in a large-scale protest under the MDF's leadership, barricading major arterial roads and at one point the N2 national highway. However, this turned ugly when residents from the neighbouring Lower Crossroads area, angered by the chaos, began to attack Marikana itself. I spoke to Marikana residents and leaders to piece together a chronology of those eventful May days.

What caused this escalation from the tactics that Marikana residents had employed before, namely memoranda and marches? And what can we infer regarding Marikana's tactics going forward? Chapter 3 posited that protest tactics may follow a logic of escalation: if conventional tactics do not work, protestors may be motivated to try more disruptive or violent ones (Zuern 2014, 287; cf. Tarrow 2011, chap. 5). Nevertheless, this does not mean that protest only escalates monotonically: Marikana's leaders have not given up on talking to Councillor Mpondwana (despite having burnt his house!). Because this instance of protest represents the culmination of Marikana's efforts at engaging the state, I will use it as a window into a discussion of Marikana's tactical trajectory over the course of its existence.

### **Marikana takes to the streets**

MDF leaders convened a special meeting on Monday 25/5/2015, announcing that they would barricade roads in the area beginning at 2am the next day. Early on Tuesday morning,

Marikana residents quietly prepared barricades of burning tyres and rubbish on the main roads in the area: Landsdowne Road to the north, Sheffield Road to the south, and the R300 motorway connecting the townships of Mitchells Plain and Delft. They then dug in and waited for a police response. Marikana leaders I spoke to claimed they had tried to keep things under control (pers. comm. 29/5/2015; interview 20/6/2015; 29/6/2015). Whenever protestors advanced their barricades, MDF leaders would be up in front to ensure that they did not move too far, too fast, or get out of hand by beginning to loot or damage surrounding businesses. They were also proud how they had barricaded the N2 highway. Unlike other informal settlements, they advanced quietly during the night, rather than *toyi-toying* (the sound of which would give away their location and alert the police). Therefore by stealth, they evaded the police and singlehandedly closed the N2 highway north of the Philippi East area on Wednesday. Last, finding that some youths among them were discussing breaking into shops along Stock Road adjoining Marikana, they forced these youths to leave their protest. They believed that these youth had come from other informal settlements, since the youths did not acknowledge or recognise MDF leaders, and when chased, had run *away* in the direction of Gugulethu rather than *back* to Marikana.

Still not hearing from the municipality, Marikana burnt a municipal depot for solid waste collection on Wednesday night—accounts differed as to whether this was planned or unplanned. Regardless, this new escalation expanded the tactical repertoire in play. While marching along Sheffield Road on Thursday, the protestors heard a rumour that Councillor Mpondwana (the local ward councillor) had claimed on Bush Radio, a popular radio station, that he had helped to bring communal taps to Marikana. Whether or not the rumour was

accurate, the claim was false.<sup>42</sup> This incensed the protesters, some of whom left immediately to burn down his house in nearby Philippi Island.

By this time, localised confrontations had begun to develop between the protesters and Lower Crossroads residents, who were furious at the disruption and barricades in their area (MDF2 18/6/2015). A Marikana man took the opportunity on Thursday evening to burn the house of a neighbour in Lower Crossroads over a dispute about prepaid electricity (MA1 18/6/2015). In retaliation, the committee there began to mobilise residents early Friday morning, driving around with a loudhailer and calling for the men to bring whatever weapons they could to a mass gathering (Lower Crossroads resident pers. comm., 6/6/2015). Violence broke out on Friday afternoon, and continued throughout Saturday.

About 70 Marikana hokkies were torched, as Lower Crossroads residents methodically moved east along Sheffield Road. A few Marikana residents were murdered on Friday night when, huddling around an outdoor fire for warmth, they were shot by several men who fled into Lower Crossroads immediately after that (pers. comm. 20/6/2015). Some Lower Crossroads residents began looting abandoned houses in Marikana on Saturday, carting away furniture and appliances (ibid.). Marikana retaliated by petrol-bombing three or four houses in Lower Crossroads. Public order police, on hand throughout the violence, finally reasserted order on Sunday by building a barbed-wire fence across the entire length of the road separating the two areas (Sheffield Road). The police presence was only lifted on 18/6/2015, two-and-a-half weeks after the violence ended.

While the confrontation developed on the ground, the Marikana leadership tried to de-escalate, offering apologies to their Lower Crossroads counterparts. By Friday afternoon (29/5/2015), Marikana leaders I managed to contact were aware that their plan had gone very wrong. One feared that "we will have to start from square one" (pers. comm., 29/5/2015). But

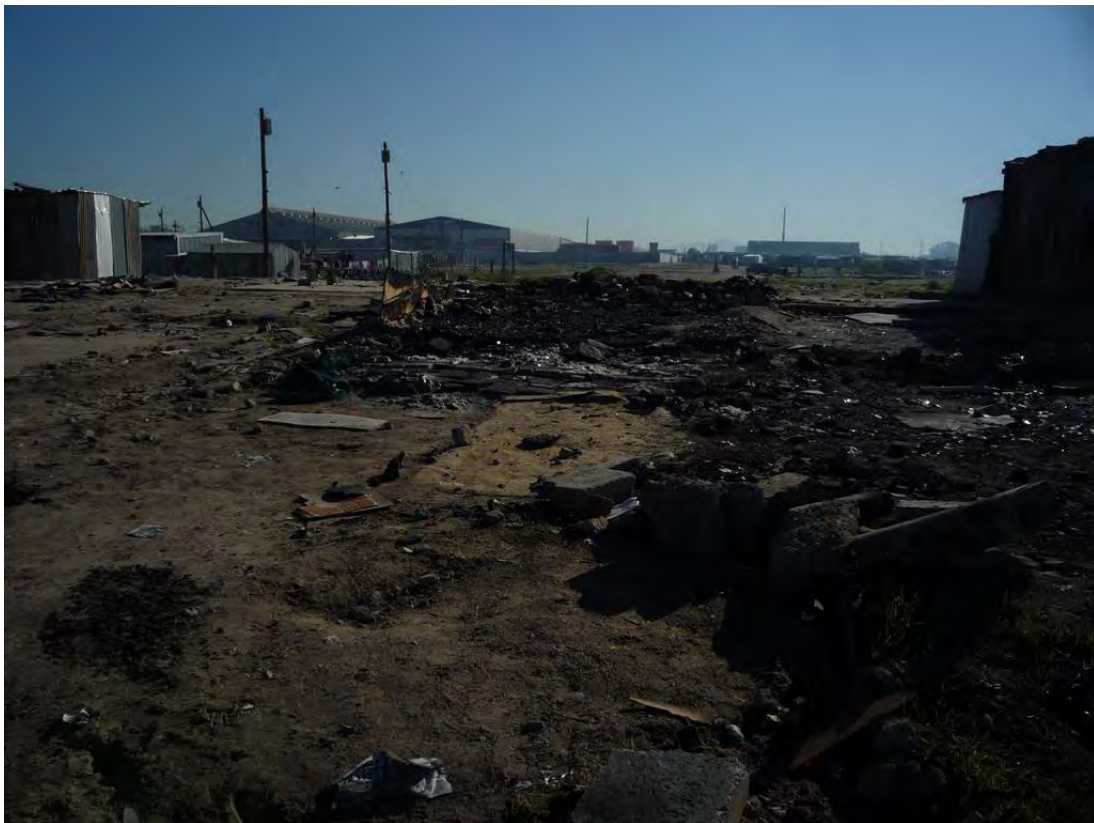
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<sup>42</sup> As discussed above, the taps were built on the residents' own initiative, pooling small amounts of money together to buy pipes and plaster.



despite Marikana leaders' apologies, Lower Crossroads leaders gave the other side an ultimatum to leave by Wednesday. Hundreds left, fearing their houses would be torched; three weeks later, these residents were only beginning to return when I visited Marikana over the weekend of 20-21 June. Several Lower Crossroads residents allegedly tried to seize land in Marikana, but were chased off by remaining Marikana residents. What the Marikana leadership was unable to handle, though, was the petty criminals who had moved in to abandoned hokkies, breaking into other houses and stealing property left behind.

**Figure 4-4: Aftermath of the Marikana protest**



Sites of several burnt houses. Marikana's meeting ground, the Stock Road shops, and the electrical poles of the adjoining "Bhekela" TRA can be seen in the background.





This sign, on the abandoned site where a house once stood, warns people against dumping household waste. The residents intend to move back (photos taken 20/6/2015).

### **The culmination of a tactical trajectory**

What caused the conflagration? Just like the land invasion itself, this protest had both distal causes and proximate triggers. While the protest was clearly a "service delivery" protest in the usual sense of the term, it was rooted in frustration at a seemingly unresponsive political leadership. In the long-term timeframe, barricades were part of a plan of gradual escalation as the municipal government failed to meet Marikana residents' demands and acknowledge their communications. In the short term, frustration was fuelled by disruptions to the electrical supply and the latest in a series of ignored letters to the municipal government; and by other running disputes and tensions between two neighbourhoods that saw themselves as communities with opposed interests.

I found in the household survey (Chapter 2) that Marikana residents were conservative-leaning in their political orientation, slightly preferring the legal route to extra-

legal direct action to advance their rights, and—as Booysen (2007) finds among the general South African population—seeing voting and protest as complementary modes of participation in political life. Many disapproved of protests, describing them as destructive, messy, and hurting the very constituency they intended to help. Prior to the protest in late May, Marikana leaders had also demonstrated the same deference to the law when organising protests. They explained to me the requirements for a protest permit: submitting a route and a crowd estimate, posting marshals, and appointing responsible officers (MDF2, MA1 19/3/2015; MDF1 19/3/2015; ME3 25/4/2015). ME3, an older committee member, explained that

*Before we do a march, we must get approval from police first. We don't break the law, we are working fully with the law. But if there's no progress, we will break it.*  
— 25/4/2015

The MDF leadership made numerous attempts to reach out to the state to voice their demands, and it was only when leaders and residents agreed that communication had entirely broken down between them and the municipality, that they turned to barricades (MDF3 29/6/2015). They began by organising a march to the subcouncil office (an intermediate level of elected local government above the ward but below the City Council) in Gugulethu (Fezeka building) as early as 3/10/2014, to hand in a memorandum addressed to the mayor. An introductory letter from the MDF to Councillor Mpondwana followed, in which they requested a meeting, but this reportedly went unanswered. After the internal conflict associated with exiling the Old Committee in December, they reached out to the ward councillor again; but he put them off, first citing the ANC's birthday celebration on 10/1/2015, and then asking them to unite with the Rolihlahla committee before he met with them.

Facing these roadblocks, MDF decided to bypass the ward councillor and engage directly with the Premier of the Western Cape. They had already tried to reach the mayor, so this was the next step up. They made three attempts to organise a march to hand a

memorandum to the provincial offices in central Cape Town. Unfortunately, the first date they picked was the date of the State Opening of Parliament, 12/2/2015. They planned one a little over a week later, but this was held back as the premier's office (to which they delivered a note on 18/2/2015) advised them that they would have to seek a police permit. With Ses'khona's help negotiating the process, they eventually secured the permit and held their march on 26/3/2015, joined by other informal settlements organised by Ses'khona.

The ward councillor saw little progress on his own efforts either: despite having talked about setting up an umbrella structure for Marikana, as well as a Ward 35 Development Forum with representatives from all area committees in his ward, neither structure had materialised at the time of my interview with him (8/5/2015). Moreover, he had reportedly also spoken in public and on a local radio station on several occasions about how he had helped the Marikana community—which only stoked their anger (MDF3, 29/6/2015). This added to some MDF leaders' poor impression of him: some believed that he had fostered intra-SANCO splits in Barcelona, Gugulethu while he was an ANC branch chairperson (*Conflict between Rolihlahla and Marikana Two*, above). Though these allegations could not be verified, his negative image could have added to the Marikana leaders' willingness to bypass him and engage directly with the municipal subcouncil, mayor's office, and even the provincial premier.

Even so, all this engagement was, for Marikana leaders, frustrating and fruitless. This led them to conclude that to bring the government to the negotiating table, they had to turn to barricades (MDF3 29/6/2015). According to MDF3, who had been part of the Marikana task team and MDF from the beginning, the protest was part of their long-term strategy vis-a-vis the municipal government: their "Plan C" (ibid.). Although the timeline was not definite, a sequence of deliberate escalation had been agreed to at a mass meeting of Marikana Two residents around the beginning of October 2014. By his account, at this meeting residents had

decided to demand the provision of basic utilities, as well as formulated an outline of the actions they would take. Plan A was to "humble ourselves a bit" and seek the municipality's assistance with letters and peaceful marches, beginning with the letter to the mayor delivered on 3/10/2014 through the subcouncil. Plan B was to continue marching, but directly to the provincial government's offices, to "challenge" the state and show Marikana's frustration. This took place on 26/3/2015.

Marikana residents believed that the municipality itself would take notice if they barricaded the N2 national highway connecting central Cape Town with the airport. "When something is not going right, [informal settlements] usually go and block the N2, sometimes the City comes and sends people, they respond quickly" (MDF3, 29/6/2015). In fact, according to two Ses'khona activists A3 and A4, Ses'khona itself had formed when informal settlement leaders came together in May 2013 intending to coordinate a joint protest along the N2 "from Grabouw, Somerset, Khayelitsha, Gugulethu, Nyanga one day... so that the government [will] come immediately" (A4 16/4/2015). Likewise, in a study of Anti-Eviction Campaign branches, a leader in QQ Section, Khayelitsha, was quoted as saying, "when we speak to the city, they listen. When we want something they respond to us because they know what we will do. They talk after we barricade" (cited by Grill 2008, 23). Therefore—and in a manner consistent with the way other communities have deployed barricades (Grill 2008; von Holdt et al. 2011)—Marikana residents made the N2 highway their target, to force a response from the municipal government.

Besides the lack of progress with their engagement strategy, problems with the power supply throughout the month of May were the other proximate source of anger. A rumour spread through Marikana that Eskom, the state utilities firm, had cut the supply to the adjoining Klipfontein informal settlement, and was only going to supply seven landowners who held formal title to the land (pers. comm. 14/5/2015). The real reason for the power

failures was that the electrical transformer station supplying Klipfontein (and thanks to illegal connections, much of Marikana itself) failed in early May, thus necessitating repair work (MDF3, 29/6/2015). Disputes had also developed between Marikana residents and their neighbours across the road in Lower Crossroads, whose electrical supplies they were tapping into through a dense network of cables hanging precariously overhead along Sheffield Road. Residents in Lower Crossroads had suffered power cuts because the lines supplying them were overloaded; they were also concerned for their safety. This standing grievance was one of the factors leading to Lower Crossroads' intervention.

Therefore, as matters stood at the start of May, Marikana already had a plan to barricade major roads for service delivery, and there were existing grievances about electricity among both Marikana and Lower Crossroads residents. In the first week of May, Eskom representatives contacted MDF leaders through the Methodist minister at Klipfontein Mission Station, and negotiated access to the faulty electrical transformer (MDF3 29/6/2015). According to MDF3, while the Eskom representatives sympathised with the Marikana residents' plight, they advised Marikana that they were only contractors, and instead gave them a contact in the City Council to negotiate with for legal access to services. After attempting to get in touch several times, they finally arranged a meeting with another department, Subcouncil Services, at which a staff member helped them to draft an official petition to the Mayoral Committee for Utility Services, Councillor Ernest Sonnenberg (meeting 11/5/2015). By this time, Marikana was ready to put their Plan C into action; it was only a matter of timing (committee meeting 16/5/2015; MDF3 29/6/2015). Having given Councillor Sonnenberg two weeks to respond, and having kept ordinary residents updated through their regular Sunday mass meetings, they mobilised the residents on Monday, setting in motion the entire chain of events.

Was it worth it? All of the MDF leaders I spoke to emphasised that they had only planned to barricade and toyi-toyi—nothing more (pers. comm., 29/5/2015, 4/6/2015, 29/6/2015). From chats with several different leaders after the protest, most Marikana leaders regretted the decision to protest. Even section committee members had fled following Lower Crossroads' ultimatum to leave (MDF3 29/6/2015). While showing me the sites of several demolished or dismantled hokkies, MDF2 commented, "how will we find peace?" (4/6/2015). MDF2 and MA4 observed that MDF3, the MDF's acting chairperson, was "scarce," in hiding, as he was afraid of retaliation from people who had been affected. RP1, from the Rolihlahla committee, commented that the MDF had been too impatient; judging by the experience of Site C, Khayelitsha, and elsewhere, they should have expected to wait longer for service delivery (interview, 20/6/2015). Even MDF3, the leader during the protest, commented that Marikana residents were all "spiritually traumatised" by the chaos (29/6/2015), and he was looking to hand over his responsibilities and 'groom' a successor (20/6/2015). Moreover, MDF leaders accepted the criticism of the committees in surrounding areas, who said that they had allowed the protests to spiral out of hand by not posting marshals along their route, and not ensuring that marchers kept behind their leaders as they marched (MA1 18/6/2015, MDF3 29/6/2015). It seems unlikely that they will return to barricades soon.

MDF3 put a different spin on things. When asked if things turned out the way he expected, he pointed out how they had moved the engagement process forward. A chaplain or pastor affiliated with the provincial Premier's office was mediating with them, and the councillor was also treating them differently now:

*This whole thing did pull the councillor to consider us now as humans. This whole thing did consider the councillor to... everything is urgent, bring these people together, it's urgent! Sorting things out is urgent! For the city to come in and put toilets, it's urgent. Everything is on pipeline now. — 29/6/2015*

Another concrete manifestation of this progress is that the long-promised Ward 35 Development Committee has taken shape, as a "Marikana Crisis Committee" instead,

comprising 16 members with two each from every formal neighbourhood and informal settlement in the ward. MDF3 expects that it will build relations between them and Lower Crossroads: "I can say that [it] will help us; when we've got something to say against Lower, then we don't go back to fight" (29/6/2015).

At least for now, the barricades appear to have achieved their intended outcome of bringing local government to the negotiating table, and it seems unlikely that either Marikana leaders or residents will take to the streets anytime soon. Nevertheless, it is not clear whether the municipality has become any closer to providing Marikana services, or if they will continue to cite (1) the uncertain outcome of the court cases and (2) the principle of not paying for infrastructure upgrades to informal settlements on private property. The ball is now in their court.

## **Conclusion**

In the course of consolidating their land occupation, Marikana leaders undertook various forms of organisational work. For the most part these fit within the ambit of street committee functions in other South African townships and informal settlements: dispute resolution, informal ordering and justice, and engaging with external agencies and resources. The structures of grassroots governance formed in Marikana can be said to fall within a standard repertoire of organisational forms. On the advice of Ses'khona (Marikana Two), and leaders with past experience in ANC and SANCO (Rolihlahla Park), they constituted themselves as street committees and development forums. The Marikana Development Forum was explicitly modelled on the Khayelitsha Development Forum, while both adopted the practice from SANCO of having additional members. In addition, they tended to describe themselves by analogy to street committees and SANCO structures. Thus, organisational form in Marikana (1) followed forms and functions that people were already familiar with, and (2) was heavily influenced by external organisations.

I found that the committees adopted bureaucratic practices as they developed: they stratified, divided their responsibilities, enumerated houses and kept records. But this was counterbalanced by resistance and inertia on the part of committee members, who after all were only volunteers with concerns about making a living. Organisational practices generally could be conceptualised in the same categories that have been previously analysed in the literature on South African street committees. These were informal justice and ordering; resolving internal disputes; and negotiating and mediating with externals. The focus on property disputes and controlling vigilantism may have been unique to Marikana, given its status as a new land occupation, but the literature is not comprehensive enough on this score.

Infighting and leadership crises in Marikana came about as committees attempted to consolidate their jurisdiction and influence. The Marikana task team (later MDF) and the Old Committee came into conflict over corruption allegations and the perception that MDF was assuming the Old Committee's functions; MDF eventually exiled the Old Committee after its members staged an arson attack on an MDF member's house. MDF and Rolihlahla also fought over their area of jurisdiction, but by 2015 their relations had improved. The Rolihlahla committee itself experienced conflict with its constituents, and demobilised significantly toward the end of my period of study.

Marikana residents' goals informed their committees' engagement with the municipal government. Rolihlahla generally worked cooperatively with Councillor Mpondwana, the ward councillor responsible for their area; though they expressed frustration that services were not being provided, committee members also accepted that it would take a long time, and considered Marikana Two to be "impatient." On the other hand, Marikana Two residents formulated a long-term engagement plan with the City—first sending letters introducing themselves and their needs to the mayor, and when that failed, marching to the provincial government's offices in late March 2015. This, together with both survey evidence and



interviews with Marikana leaders, suggests that they had a generally conservative orientation, preferring conventional tactics (memorandums, legal protests) to disruptive direct action (barricades, unapproved marches). But as they lost hope of winning advancements through legal means, they decided to put into action their "Plan C," barricading major roads around Marikana in late May. Unfortunately this was soon hijacked by neighbours settling scores between Marikana and the adjacent Lower Crossroads area. Amid violence that saw about 70 Marikana hokkies and three or four Lower Crossroads houses burnt, MDF leaders feared that they would have to "start again from square one." However, a month on, the MDF's acting chairperson expressed cautious optimism: though he had been "spiritually affected" by the violence just like his constituents, it appeared that the councillor was finally moving forward with setting up a ward-wide committee that would build bridges between the different grassroots governance structures, and push development forward. It remains too early to say whether the barricades were successful in achieving their long-term goal of attaining service delivery for the area, but their leadership appears to be satisfied by progress made.

## Chapter 5 Conclusion

This study has documented organisational efforts in Marikana from its beginnings to the present. The first puzzle was what—if not "organisation"—enabled the Marikana land invasion. I challenged the assertion that the land invasion was organised. The academic literature on housing informality conceptualises squatter settlements as the result of either of two processes, stealthy encroachments or organised land invasions (Gilbert and Gugler 1982, 89; Rogerson 1989; Durand-Lasserve and Royston 2002, 4–5). Because of their speed, it is generally assumed that land invasions are highly organised operations. But Marikana did not bear many of the hallmarks of organisation. The vast majority of the settlers joined the land invasion after having seen it for themselves, and had not known anyone in Marikana before deciding to move there. Even the planning meetings that had taken place prior to the land invasion were attended by only a small number of the eventual settlers, and amounted to nothing more than the airing of shared grievances followed by an agreement to invade the land at a specific date and time. Neither formal organisation nor interpersonal networks could account for the take-off of the Marikana land invasion from ten houses on the first day to thousands by the time the state had stopped trying to suppress it.

I found that the Marikana story had indeed begun with planning meetings, dating back to a failed land invasion attempt in November 2012. But common problems and grievances faced by Marikana settlers generated a shared identity. Interviews revealed that people saw each other as oppressed nonwhites who had suffered from apartheid's exclusionary land policies, and as "backyarders," abused by controlling landlords charging high rents. With these common referents, they spotted an opportunity to redress their lived experience of injustice—the ongoing land invasion attempt. As Bayat (1997a) argues, contested space can itself serve as an organising medium for collective action even in the absence of formal organisation or interpersonal networks (which he classes together as *active networks*). The

*passive network* of atomised individuals brought together by space and recognising, among each other, a common interest, activated the collective identities or injustice frames of the would-be Marikana settlers, and triggered the large numbers of people joining the land invasion. The fact that Marikana was next to a local landmark (Goal supermarket) and along two main transport corridors (Lansdowne and Sheffield Roads) helped it gain attention. Court documents and interviews with local police officers also suggest that the recent scrutiny that the South African Police Services and the municipal government received, as a result of the then-ongoing Lwandle Eviction Ministerial Enquiry, made them more cautious about continuing the operation against the land invaders. These factors contributed to the Marikana land invasion's success.

Nevertheless, this study's limitations must be noted. Due to the single-case design of this study, I do not make any claims as to the *general* nature of organisation in South African land invasions. Nor do I attempt to explain why other similar areas do not see land invasions. I can only suggest that land invasions might be triggered (as was the case in Marikana) by local leaders acting as "issue entrepreneurs" (McCarthy and Zald 1977, 1215). Moreover, though the take-off conditions for a successful land invasion are clearly important in many large land invasions (cf. Peattie 1990; Cuenya et al. 1990), these conditions remain underdetermined in a single-case design. There is scope for a "rapid-response" ethnographic study (along the lines of the Sinwell et al. 2009 study on xenophobia) on the sidelines of a land invasion attempt, to identify reasons why people might choose to (or not to) participate.

The second topic I addressed was the nature of organising in Marikana. As Runciman (2011) and Drivdal (2014, 20–21) have observed, South African social movement literature is sparse on findings about leadership and community organising in poorer South African communities. Though the literature established, soon after the democratic transition, that street committees remained vibrant even as civics and SANCO became increasingly

moribund (Cherry, Jones, and Seekings 2000; Lee and Seekings 2002; Staniland 2008), we know little about the role of the lowest rung of grassroots governance today, and less about how it might emerge. I supplement the literature by focusing on committee formation and role-definition at the initial phase of informal settlement-building.

Marikana residents were unanimous in telling me that there were no leaders during the land invasion; leadership came after, through the election of various task teams and committees. Organisational theory suggests that new organisations emerge based on the building blocks of organisation, including organisational forms and practices, that are widely understood in a society (J. W. Meyer and Rowan 1977, 345)—or in social movement terms, the "repertoire" or organisational forms (Clemens 1993). Documenting reasons for the emergence of grassroots governance structures in Marikana, I found that most people gave functional or cultural reasons why committees are elected—that they played particular roles, or that people were 'used' to having committees. While the earlier task teams served functional ends (i.e., were driven by demands from constituents or the need to represent the settlers in court), the section committees were intended to take care of problems arising from their communal living situation, and served a variety of culturally-determined functions—they were typically likened to the street committees in long-standing informal settlements. But the Marikana Two structure was also heavily influenced by Ses'khona, an external player. Siyabulela, Ses'khona's liaison in Marikana, was seen as an example to follow as he himself had gone from an informal settlement to formal homeownership—this gave credibility to his advice on everything from organisational structure to elections.

Organisational theory also suggests that the degree of bureaucratisation tends to increase over time, since organisation serves both efficiency and legitimacy. While bureaucratisation was evidenced in the division of labour between Marikana Development Forum (MDF) and the section committees, hierarchies of feedback and accountability, the

enumeration of houses, and record-keeping, there was also a countervailing tendency towards demobilisation since the committee members were volunteers and resisted turning their roles into professional duties. Practices of participatory democracy—or at least perceptions and claims of them—were important in legitimating decisions and, indeed, the committees themselves. Even so, substitutes and replacements often happened without fresh elections; it was more important that the structure was initially elected.

Most committee practices documented were similar to those mentioned in the literature. However, certain practices appeared to be unique to the context of a new informal settlement. In particular, the committees were trying to control vigilantism. They also tended to settle property disputes with reference to two principles: that their common need for space, or land, brought them to Marikana; and that those who lived in Marikana would one day be entitled to formal houses from the state.

The MDF's primary mandate was to engage the state for services. In doing so, they followed a logic of gradual escalation. When memoranda and marches to the subcouncil, and then the provincial premier's office elicited no response, they turned to barricades to be heard by the state. Despite triggering a weekend of violence, the MDF's acting chairperson considered the barricade to have met their objectives: it had forced the councillor to proactively meet with them, and he believed that services would soon follow.

Again, the limitations of this research design should be acknowledged. Though I attempted to document a full range of committee practices, I could not discount confirmation bias: that while I was finding instances of practices that resembled those previously described in the literature, I might not have asked the correct probes, nor picked up on differences in implementation, or even differences that they or I had not realised existed. While I sat in on three committee meetings and a mass meeting, and tailed several committee members on their duties (and except for one committee meeting, these observations were not arranged in

advance) I must acknowledge that this was a small sample of participant observations, unfortunately limited by the amount of time that the leaders were willing to entertain my questions. Access to meeting notes for the early period of the Marikana Two area certainly helped address these gaps, and shed new light especially on the institutional consolidation which transformed the Marikana task team into the MDF.

Moreover, not having observed SANCO branch or Khayelitsha Development Forum (KDF) activities, it was impossible to verify the extent to which, for instance, MDF actually functioned like either. Their practices might have been different despite the analogies between their structure and other models that they drew and presented to me. For instance, we might expect to see a greater degree of bureaucratisation, and legitimacy founded on *institutionalisation* (being an office-holder of an established organisation) rather than *performance* (meeting residents' demands). Therefore, the description should only be taken to mean that they used these external models to present and explain the roles that they aspired to play.

Another way of conceptualising this limitation would be to contrast social constructivist and positivist views of the data (Creswell 2007, 20–21). A positivist interpretation would hold that Marikana leaders were describing an objectively-existing phenomenon—local leadership—which had identifiable, pre-set goals, roles, functions, and procedures waiting to be documented. In reality, my questions were sometimes the first time that Marikana leaders were explicitly invited to reflect on aspects of their leadership. For example, as ME1 (19/3/2015) explained the procedure they used to deal with empty houses, I noticed that he switched from the conditional "if we saw there are empty houses" to the hypothetical "maybe we vandalise [demolish] that house," and that the timeframe of the procedure was actually longer than he had served as a committee member. Following this up, I confirmed that he was describing a procedure that had never been implemented from start to

finish. Another instance came up as I asked RP2 (20/3/2015) to describe the "disciplinary committee" within his committee (a body that was supposed to oversee committee members themselves), he demurred, saying that they had just been formed. Thus, it was possible that the practices of leadership were defined and refined as informants spoke about them to me.

### **Contributions of this study**

This study brings together the urban studies literature on land invasions and social movement theory, with implications for both fields. In addition, I update the literature on South African grassroots governance at the lowest levels, which has recently been somewhat neglected compared to studies of new social movement organisations.

First, I analyse land invasions with a social movement studies lens, thereby problematizing the notion of "organisation" in a land invasion. Many phenomena fall under the banner of organisation; Marikana demonstrates how a large constituency may be mobilised indirectly with a small organisational core. Moreover, Thompson and Tapscott (2010, 14) have argued that deprivation and favourable political opportunities taken together are sufficient triggers for social movements in the global South, because people with more survivalist concerns lack the ability to construct identities and frames sufficient to support mobilisation. I would argue that this was not true in the case of Marikana—that recognising deprivation to be oppressive (as backyarders do) can in fact create a common identity sufficient to support a large-scale mobilisation. Generalising this thought, I have followed Bayat in arguing that common identity, plus space as a mobilising medium, played the role that an interpersonal network would play in a more 'organised' collective action. So the extent to which an instance of collective action was 'organised' can be indicative of how widespread or active collective action frames are in that society—the less organisation, the more prominent the role of frames and identities.

Passive networks have so far been neglected in the literature as a mechanism for collective mobilisation, appearing mostly in Bayat's (1997a, 16–17; 1997b; 2007; 2012) own work and only mentioned in passing elsewhere (cf. Fabricius 2012; Heller and Jones 2013, 177–78; Huang, Xue, and Li 2014, 179). Chapter 3 makes a contribution to social movement studies by illustrating the mechanism—passive networks—by which collective action frames may trigger episodes of collective action. In Bayat's original exposition, passive networks were activated by an external threat, against members of a subaltern constituency, within a defined space, who recognised commonality of interest among each other. A shared collective action frame is capable of generating such commonality of interest, as shown in Marikana. The role of the passive network must not be overstated: the 'opportunity' seen here was created by a small organisational core of more committed local activists. Nevertheless, in the end they were vastly outnumbered by the new settlers to whom they had no connection. Therefore, Marikana demonstrates that a passive network can trigger mobilisation to take advantage of an *opportunity*, not just a threat as Bayat originally argued.

Turning from the social movement analysis of a land invasion to the organising that happened thereafter, I described the practices of the Marikana Two and Rolihlahla governance structures. Literature from the immediate post-apartheid period concluded that civics had declined (Lanegran 1996; Seekings 1996), before subsequent studies challenged this picture by pointing out that structures at the lowest level remained vibrant (Lee and Seekings 2002; Cherry, Jones, and Seekings 2000). However, attention to grassroots governance has since ebbed, even as new social movements gained in prominence and were argued to be their successors (Zuern 2014). Drivdal (2014, 20–21), in a recent doctoral thesis, comments that informal settlement committees and their practices are understudied, treated as "empirical curiosities" rather than opportunities for further study. I supplement her work, dealing with organisational forms and routines in three established Cape Town informal



settlements. My focus has been the emergence of organisational forms in a new informal settlement, trends in organisational consolidation, unique practices of grassroots governance, and the tactical or strategic trajectory that the MDF took in making their demands heard. Data on the socio-political attitudes of land occupiers also shows that while being more disposed to participate in governance (“participation” as conceptualised in Booysen 2009), they maintain high levels of trust in the courts and in voting.

There is only a weak resemblance between this grassroots organising and South African new social movements, such as the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign or the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee, that deal with eviction- or services-related mobilisation. Though Abahlali and Ses'khona were involved in Marikana at various times, the circumstances of their involvement (especially Ses'khona's) were quite different from the cases previously examined. Because of the technical and professionalised nature of the legal process, eviction became a minor concern of the occupiers compared to the provision of water and sanitation. Therefore, unlike Thorn (2008; Thorn and Oldfield 2011) and others, I did not primarily focus on Marikana's response to the eviction. And with regard to services in Marikana, service *delivery* rather than *cut-offs* were the primary concern. Unlike for instance the introduction of prepaid electricity or water meters (cf. Egan and Wafer 2006; Dugard 2010), neoliberal-inspired cost-recovery policies were not responsible for depriving Marikana residents of services. Motta and Nilsen (2011) have argued that global South social movements are generally of two strands—those whose constituents benefited from earlier developmentalist state policies and are now suffering from structural adjustment (neoliberal) reforms, and those whose constituents had *never* benefited from either and whose concerns are "offensive" rather than "defensive." Adopting this distinction, Marikana's residents are a constituency on the offensive.

As the number of households in inadequate housing grows in cities across South Africa, the pressure for new informal settlement formation will only increase. The Cape Town municipal government estimates that within its jurisdiction about 400,000 households live in inadequate conditions (150,000 in informal settlements), and 16,000–18,000 more join them annually, while the municipality can only accommodate half that number every year (Sims 2014). Land invasions are effectively constrained by the operations of the Anti-Land Invasion Unit, the largest unit within Cape Town's municipal law enforcement services (City of Cape Town n.d.)—the previous land invasion of comparable size to Marikana 2014 was Sigalo, in 2011, so most of that increase is absorbed by existing townships and informal settlements (Sims 22/4/2015). There is scope for agents on all sides—from policymakers to social movement participants—to reach a more systematic and productive understanding of how to deal with the inevitable formation of new informal settlements, minimising violence and addressing safety and public health issues. While the state has improved its handling of the eviction process, the same must be done for dealing with the legitimate needs of land occupiers once they are entrenched.

## Appendix 1: Fieldwork record

Date	Activity	Location
28 Oct 2014	Interview with Activist 1 (A1)	A1's workplace
30 Oct 2014	Interview with Rolihlahla Park 1 (RP1) & RP2	Marikana – Rolihlahla Park, RP1's house
12 Nov 2014	Group interview with RP3, RP4, RP5, Marikana Two, Section D-1 (MD1)	Marikana – Rolihlahla Park, RP2's house
20 Nov 2014	Attended court hearing for the Rolihlahla Park case	Western Cape High Court
26 Nov 2014	Interviews with RP6, RP7, RP8	Marikana – Rolihlahla Park, RP 7's house
12 Jan 2015	Site visit to Rolihlahla Park, Marikana Two; chat with MDF1 (Marikana Development Forum member)	Marikana
5 Feb 2015	Interview with MB1 and MB2, shadowed RP8 while he went about committee business	Lower Crossroads, Marikana
6 Feb 2015	Interview with RP10 (resident)	Rolihlahla Park
13 Feb 2015	Focus group with MC1, 2, 3 (Marikana Two section C committee members)	Marikana – Marikana Two section C, MC1's house
16 Feb 2015	Interview with Activist 2	Marikana – Rolihlahla Park
6 Mar 2015	Site visit to Marikana	Marikana
13 Mar 2015	Pilot survey	Marikana
14 Mar 2015	Survey day 1	Marikana
18 Mar 2015	Attended court hearing for the Marikana Two case	Wynberg Magistrate's Court
19 Mar 2015	Interviews with MDF1, MDF2, ME1, MA1 (section committee chairpersons)	Marikana
20 Mar 2015	Interview with RP2	Marikana
21 Mar 2015	Survey day 2	Marikana
6 Apr 2015	Site visit to Marikana	Marikana
12 Apr 2015	Phone calls with MDF2, tried unsuccessfully to arrange to observe MDF election	–
15 Apr 2015	Site visit to Marikana	Marikana
16 Apr 2015	Attended court hearing for Ses'khona leaders' sentencing in relation to "poo protest" case. Interviewed A3 (Ses'khona spokesperson) and A4 (Ses'khona and SANCO leader)	Bellville Magistrate's Court
17 Apr 2015	Site visit to Marikana	Marikana
18 Apr 2015	Survey day 3; interview with MB3 (section committee chairperson)	Marikana
22 Apr 2015	Interview with Mrs Shehaam Sims Director: Urbanisation	Civic Centre
25 Apr 2015	Survey day 4; follow-up interview with MB3, interview with ME3 (committee member)	Marikana
28 Apr 2015	Attended MDF committee meeting	Marikana
2 May 2015	Survey day 5	Marikana
7 May 2015	Interview with MDF4, MC4	Marikana
8 May 2015	Interview with Councillor Mzuzile	Philippi East Community

	Mpondwana	Hall, Ntloyiya Road
11 May 2015	Sat in on meeting at Civic Centre between MDF members and staff member from the municipality's Subcouncil Support Office	Civic Centre
14 May 2015	Interview with MDF3	Marikana
16 May 2015	Interview with Mafo Siyabulela (Ses'khona Chief Organiser); shadowed MDF3 for committee business, including two committee meetings	Marikana
21 May 2015	Follow-up interview with MDF3; interviewed ME4	Marikana
22 May 2015	Interviews with Lt Col Nel and Warrant Officer Sibidla; attended impromptu mass meeting	Philippi East SAPS Station; Marikana
25 May 2015	Phone call with "Bhejula" (original Marikana committee ex-chairperson)	–
29 May 2015	Phone calls with MDF2, MDF3, RP1, RP2, Mafo Siyabulela	–
4 June 2015	Phone calls with MDF2, MDF3	–
18 June 2015	Interview MDF2 and MA1	Claremont
20 June 2015	Site visit to Marikana	Marikana
28 June 2015	Phone call with RP9	–
29 June 2015	Interview with MDF3	Cape Town

## **Appendix 2: Interview guide for Marikana residents and leaders**

### *Background*

- Where were you born, and how long have you lived in Cape Town?
- When did you come to Marikana? Where did you live before that?
- Do you have a family to support? Who? How do you support them?
- How did you find out that people were moving here? [Through what channels? Face-to-face, phone call, text message?] Have you told other people to come to Marikana?
- Why did you choose to move here?
- Why is this place called Marikana? Who decided it? How did you hear about the Marikana story?

### *Community*

- Do you think most people here can be trusted? Do you feel more trust here in Marikana, or in your old neighbourhood? Are people suspicious of each other here? Why?
- In your daily life, do you help people? What sort of help do you give? Why? Do you get anything in return?
- Does Marikana feel like a community to you? Why do you think so?

### *Participation*

- Are there any community projects happening in Marikana? (E.g., neighbourhood watch, hoy-hoy) Do you participate? Why [not]?
- What activities or projects would help the community but are not being done right now?
- Do you know of any groups or organizations active here? Are you a member / are you active? Why [not]?
- I'm going to read out a list of groups, and I would like you to tell me which ones you have worked with before. When did you work with them? What did you do for them?
  - Civic/street committee/neighbourhood or residents' committee
  - SANCO/political party
  - Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign
  - Abahlali baseMjondolo
  - Any other organisations?
- Have you engaged with government people (social workers, ward councillors, police) about issues or problems in Marikana? Did they help?
- Do you think you have rights? Where do your rights come from?

### *For leaders*

- Were you a civic or SANCO leader, or a street committee leader before you started living here in Marikana?
- When did you become a community leader here? Why did you choose to do it?
- When did the community choose the street or section committees?
  - What do these section committees do? Do they face difficulties?
  - When did you start having section committees? What made people decide that they needed to elect section committees?

- Can you describe the election process?
- Do you have trouble dealing with residents? With other street committees in the area?
- What are the challenges that your committee / development forum faces?
- As a committee, what do you aim to achieve? What are your objectives now? Have they changed since the beginning?
- *For MDF members*
  - When did the MDF come about? What made people decide that they need something above the section committees?
  - Does MDF hold regular meetings? Among itself / for residents?
  - What is/are the goal(s) of the MDF?
  - What are the roles in the MDF?
  - What is your own role in the MDF? What do you do in that role?
  - What does the MDF do that the section committees don't do?
- *Gender*
  - Do men and women have different roles? For instance, are there some roles that everyone thinks, it must be a man for this job, or a woman for this job?
  - Are there issues that people think only the men can handle, or only the women can handle, or is there no difference?
- Is [organisation name] active in Marikana? What were your aims when you engaged with them? How did you get in touch with them?
  - Ses'khona
  - SANCO
  - Ward committee / community policing forum
  - Ward councillor
  - ANC
  - Are there other organisations?

Do you want to add anything else? Any questions for me?

## Appendix 3: Questionnaire

### Marikana / Rolihlahla Park community survey

Section A: Interview details			
A1 Your code		A2 Area: M / RP / M2	Section:
A3 Interview date	dd / mm / 2015	A4 Interview time	hh : mm

Section B: House details	
B1	Community number (if any): <input type="text"/> Our reference number: <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> Law enforcement number (if any): <input type="text"/> Even-numbered? <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our reference number is [your cluster number]/[house number in cluster].             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If it is your 2nd, 4th etc. survey of the day, tick "even-numbered?" and in the split survey section, read statements 1f and 2f</li> </ul> </li> <li>Law enforcement numbers are given in Marikana and Rolihlahla Park. They look like this: M#### (Marikana) or MC##### (Rolihlahla Park)</li> <li>Community numbers are given in Marikana Two. They look like this: M#####A, M#####B, M#####C etc. (A-section, B-section, C-section etc.)</li> <li>Rolihlahla Park houses usually have "149". This is not a community number!</li> </ul>
B2	What material is the house made of? <input type="checkbox"/> Corrugated metal <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Other: <input type="text"/>
B3	What sort of floor is there? <input type="checkbox"/> Carpet <input type="checkbox"/> Plastic <input type="checkbox"/> None Other: <input type="text"/>
B4	How big is the house? <input type="text"/> square metres How many rooms? <input type="text"/>

#### Interviewer, say:

*Hello. My name is [...]. I am here today with a research team from UCT. We are trying to help your community fight eviction and gain access to services, by getting information about who lives here. We also want to find out about how your community is getting organised. We have asked the permission of your neighbourhood committee leader to visit the community.*

*May I speak with the owner of this house?*

[If he / she is the owner] *May I please ask you a few questions?*

[If he / she is not the owner] *Is the owner in? May I ask him or her a few questions?*

[If no / owner not free / owner not available] *Ok. Are you willing to answer a few questions?*

[Give info sheet to interviewee] *Before we begin, I need to explain to you that your participation is voluntary. You can choose to skip any question, or to stop at any time. We will take up about 25 – 30 minutes of your time. Your information will be kept confidential. This paper has more information about our research. If you agree to be interviewed, please sign the section at the bottom of the page. If there is another adult, I would like to ask him or her a few questions as well.*

Refused interview, this is a substitute ☐

Number of house in cluster:

**Section C: Household roster**Number of people: [If speaking to owner] *What is your name? How old are you?*[If owner not free / not available] *How are you related to the owner? Who else lives in this house? How are they related to the owner?*

- In the "I" column, please put a tick ✓ next to the name of the person you interviewed.
- If there is uncertainty, someone lives here if s/he has slept here at least four nights per week for the last four weeks
- What is this person's relationship to the owner? Please fill in the "Relation" column as follows:

1	Owner	4	Son or daughter	7	Father or mother	10	Friend
2	Husband or wife	5	Brother or sister	8	Father or mother of partner	98	Other ( <i>specify</i> )
3	Boyfriend or girlfriend	6	Brother or sister of partner	9	Other relative, e.g., cousin, aunt	99	Refused / no answer

- Does this person work? What sort of work does s/he do? Please fill in the "Work" column as follows:

0	No, in school / university / technical school / vocational course	3	Piece work / casual	6	No, looking for work
1	Yes, full-time	4	Runs business / sells things	98	Other ( <i>specify</i> )
2	Yes, part-time or contract	5	No, not working	99	Refused / no answer

**C1 Adults aged 19 and above**

#	I	First name	Surname	Gender	Age	Relation	Work	Cost to get to work	Education (highest or current)
e.g.	✓	Thembani	Jojo	M / F	32	1: owner	1: security	R 16	Grade 12
1	✓			M / F					
2				M / F					
				M / F					
				M / F					
				M / F					
				M / F					

**C2 Minors aged 18 and below (Please label # consecutively from C1, i.e., if household has 2 adults, first child is #3)**

#	First name	Surname	Gender	Age	Relation	Grade / Reason why not going to school	Receiving grant?
			M / F				
			M / F				
			M / F				
			M / F				
			M / F				
			M / F				



Now I am going to ask you a few questions about children, elderly people, and people with disabilities or health conditions.

<b>Section D: Vulnerable people</b>					
<b>D1</b> Does your family have any children who do not live with you? Why not?					
First name	Surname	Gender	Age	Reason	Receiving grant?
		M / F			
		M / F			
		M / F			
<b>D2</b> To confirm: So how many children do you receive the child grant for, in total?					
<b>D3</b> Does anyone in this house receive the old age grant? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> if yes: who? <input type="text"/> name					
<b>D4</b> Does anyone in your household receive a disability grant? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> if yes: who? <input type="text"/> name					
<b>D5</b> Does anyone in this house have difficulty... (Write down name of person with difficulty)					
... Seeing (even with glasses)	Hearing (even with hearing aid)	Walking or climbing stairs	Remembering things	Washing and dressing	Talking to people (incl. sign language)
<b>D6</b> Does anyone in this house need chronic medication? (e.g., asthma, high blood pressure, diabetes, HIV – no need to know what sort of illness) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					
Who needs chronic medication? <input type="text"/>					

Now I am going to ask you a few questions about your house and where you used to stay

<b>Section E: House</b>	
<b>E1</b> When did you move to [Marikana / Rolihlahla Park]?	DD / MM / 20YY
<b>E2</b> When did you build this house?	<input type="checkbox"/> Same as F1 <input type="text"/> DD / MM / 20YY
<b>E3</b> Not counting the materials for your house, did you pay anyone to rent or buy the land that your house is on? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes: how much did you pay? R <input type="text"/>	
<b>E4</b> Where did you live before you came to [Marikana / Rolihlahla Park / Marikana 2]? ( <u>Province</u> e.g. Eastern Cape, or <u>Town</u> e.g. Grahamstown or <u>Area of Cape Town</u> e.g. Lower Crossroads)	<input type="text"/>
<b>E5</b> What kind of house did you live in?	
<input type="checkbox"/> RDP / other formal house <input type="checkbox"/> Informal house in backyard <input type="checkbox"/> Informal house <u>not</u> in backyard <input type="text"/> Other: <input type="text"/>	
<b>E6</b> Was it rented? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, family house <input type="checkbox"/> No, other rent-free	
If rented, how much did you pay per month for rent, electricity and water? R <input type="text"/>	

Now I have some questions about daily needs like electricity, water, toilets

<b>Section F: Services</b>	
<b>F1</b> Do you have electricity here? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (go to F1a) <input type="checkbox"/> No (go to F1b)	
<b>F1a</b> If you have electricity, who helped you install it?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Did it myself <input type="checkbox"/> Someone in household <input type="checkbox"/> Community member <input type="checkbox"/> Family member living elsewhere <input type="text"/> Other: <input type="text"/>	
<b>F1b</b> (No electricity) Where do you charge your phone? <input type="text"/>	
<b>F2</b> Do you have to pay for your water?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Always <input type="checkbox"/> Most of the time <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely <input type="checkbox"/> Never	
<b>F3</b> Where do you get your water? <input type="text"/>	

<b>F4</b> On average, how much do you pay for it?	R		per month
<b>F4a</b> How long do you walk to get water?			minutes
<b>F5a</b> What type of toilet do you use? (also ask F5 and F6 regardless of their answer)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Go to the bush	<input type="checkbox"/> Pit latrine	<input type="checkbox"/> Flush toilet	Other: <input type="text"/>
<b>F5</b> How long do you walk to use a pit latrine?			minutes
<b>F6</b> How long do you walk to use a flush toilet?			minutes
<b>F7</b> What do you use to cook?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Electricity	<input type="checkbox"/> Paraffin	<input type="checkbox"/> Gas	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood	Other: <input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>
<b>F8</b> Do you own the following household items:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Electric stove	<input type="checkbox"/> Microwave	<input type="checkbox"/> Fridge	<input type="checkbox"/> Car / bakkie
<input type="checkbox"/> TV	<input type="checkbox"/> Pay TV subscription e.g. DSTV, M-Net	<input type="checkbox"/> DVD Player	
<input type="checkbox"/> More than one radio set			
<b>F9</b> How many people in your household own a cellphone?			

Now let's talk about your relationships with the community

<b>Section G: Community</b>					
<b>G1</b> How did you find out that people were moving to Marikana / Rolihlahla Park?					
<input type="checkbox"/> Saw it myself	<input type="checkbox"/> Heard from friend	<input type="checkbox"/> Heard from colleague			
<input type="checkbox"/> Heard from family	<input type="checkbox"/> Was at community meeting	Other: <input type="text"/>			
<b>G2</b> Before you moved here, did you know anyone who was already staying here?					
<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, friend	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, colleague			
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, family	Yes, other: <input type="text"/>				
<b>G3</b> After you moved here, did you tell anyone else to come here?					
<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, friend	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, colleague			
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, family	Yes, other: <input type="text"/>				
<b>G4</b> [do not read options] If you need a bit of cash or food, who do you go to for help? [tick "1 <sup>st</sup> choice"] If they cannot help you, who do you go to next? [tick "2 <sup>nd</sup> choice"]					
<b>G5</b> If you have a small dispute with someone (e.g., fight, theft), who do you go to for help? If they cannot help you, who do you go to next?					
<b>G4: Cash or food</b>			<b>G5: Small dispute</b>		
1 <sup>st</sup> choice	2 <sup>nd</sup> choice		1 <sup>st</sup> choice	2 <sup>nd</sup> choice	
		Partner			Partner
		Family			Family
		Friend			Friends
		Neighbour			Neighbour
		Government			Government
		Police			Police
		Street committee			Street committee
		Church			Church
		NGOs			NGOs
		No one to turn to			No one to turn to
Write here		Other	Write here		Other

Now I have a few questions about law enforcement

<b>Section H: Law enforcement</b>			
<b>H1</b>	Do you know there is a court case going on against your community?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>H2</b>	Have law enforcement officers visited you? If yes: how many times?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>H3</b>	Have law enforcement officers damaged or destroyed your property?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>H4</b>	Have law enforcement officers tried to evict you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	If yes, did they show you a court order?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

I have some questions about your street or section committee and other organisations

<b>Section J: Local organisations</b>			
<b>J1</b>	Do you know your committee leader?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I recognise him/her <input type="text" value="write name here"/> Yes, I know their name
<b>J2</b>	Do you know anyone in your committee? (just one person is enough)	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I recognise him/her <input type="text" value="write name here"/> Yes, I know their name
<b>J3</b>	Do you think your committee is helping you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
<b>J4</b>	Do you go to your committee's meetings? (read options)	<input type="checkbox"/> Almost always	<input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely <input type="checkbox"/> Never
<b>J5a</b>	Do you want to be a committee member?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I am a member
	Why / why not?	<input type="text"/>	
<b>J6</b>	Do you know anyone from Ses'khona? (just one person is enough)	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I recognise him/her <input type="text" value="write name here"/> Yes, I know their name
<b>J7</b>	Do you think Ses'khona is helping you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
<b>J8</b>	Do you participate in Ses'khona's activities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	What sort of activities?	<input type="text"/>	
<b>J9</b>	Do you know if any other organisations or social movements are involved in the community?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes: what are these organisations? <input type="text"/>
<b>J10</b>	Did you vote in the elections last year (2014)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>J11</b>	Are you going to vote in the elections next year (2016)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
<b>J12</b>	Have you met your ward councillor?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>J13</b>	Do you think your ward councillor is helping you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

I want to ask you about your opinions on a few issues. First I will read four statements on your environment and the people around you. After each statement I will give you five options. Please tell me which is closest to your view.

<b>Section K1: Attitudes</b>							
Tick (✓) the box that represents the interviewee's view. DK = don't know							
#	Statement	5	4	3	2	1	DK
1	Generally speaking, I trust other people in South Africa: <u>almost everyone</u> (5), <u>most people</u> (4), <u>some people</u> (3), <u>few people</u> (2), <u>almost no one</u> (1)						
2	Generally speaking, I trust other people living close to me in Marikana: <u>almost everyone</u> (5), <u>most people</u> (4), <u>some people</u> (3), <u>few people</u> (2), <u>almost no one</u> (1)						
3	I feel safe here in Marikana during the day: <u>almost always</u> (5), <u>most of the time</u> (4), <u>sometimes</u> (3), <u>rarely</u> (2), or <u>almost never</u> (1)						
4	I feel safe here in Marikana at night: <u>almost always</u> (5), <u>most of the time</u> (4), <u>sometimes</u> (3), <u>rarely</u> (2), or <u>almost never</u> (1)						

I will read a few statements on society and politics. Here, please tell me whether you agree strongly (AS), just agree (A), disagree (D), disagree strongly (DS), or have no opinion (N).

#	Statement	AS	A	N	D	DS	DK
<b>Ask people either questions 1 &amp; 2 (interview 1, 3 etc.), or 1f &amp; 2f (interview 2, 4 etc.)</b>							
1	<i>I will help my neighbour in an emergency</i>						
1f	<i>I will help my neighbour in an emergency <u>if I know he is a foreigner</u></i>						
2	<i>If I see a skollie stealing from a spaza shop in Marikana, I will try and do something about it</i>						
2f	<i>If I see a skollie stealing from a spaza shop in Marikana, I will try and do something about it <u>if I know it is owned by a foreigner</u></i>						
<b>On 2/2f, if agree or agree strongly: What will you do?</b>							
<b>Ask everybody questions 3 – 8</b>							
3	<i>I don't mind it if a foreigner is living next to me</i>						
4	<i>I will take part in action to prevent foreigners from opening a business in Marikana</i>						
5	<i>Voting in a local government election will help us get services from the City</i>						
6	<i>Protesting against the City is an effective way to get better services</i>						
7	<i>Among poor South Africans, workers respect unemployed people</i>						
8	<i>Among poor South Africans, workers have the same goals as unemployed people</i>						

Lastly I will read four pairs of statements. Tell me which one you agree with more, and whether you agree (A) or agree strongly (AS).

#	Statement	AS	A	Neither	DK
1	a) <i>The government is like a parent. It should decide what is good for us.</i>				
	b) <i>The government is like our worker. We are the bosses and should tell government what to do.</i>				
2	a) <i>Men make better leaders than women.</i>				
	b) <i>Women and men should have the same chance of being elected to lead.</i>				
3	a) <i>We can depend on the courts to protect our rights.</i>				
	b) <i>We are the ones who make our own rights real.</i>				
4	a) <i>South Africa should belong to all who live in it.</i>				
	b) <i>In South Africa, rights should be for locals, not foreigners.</i>				

Interviewer: Please ask another adult the questions in Section K. Find this adult according to the following list (please tick) and **remember to get his/her consent as well!**

	First choice: Partner (husband/wife/boyfriend/girlfriend) of your main interviewee
	Second choice: Any adult who is of the opposite sex as the main interviewee
	Third choice: Any other adult
	No other adult

Is [your husband/wife/boyfriend/girlfriend/another adult] at home? May I ask him/her the same questions about their opinions? [To second adult] First I will read four statements on your environment and the people around you. After each statement I will give you five options. Please tell me which is closest to your view.

Section K2: Attitudes		Person #: <input type="text"/>					
Tick (✓) the box that represents the interviewee's view. DK = don't know							
#	Statement	5	4	3	2	1	DK
1	Generally speaking, I trust other people in South Africa: <u>almost everyone</u> (5), <u>most people</u> (4), <u>some people</u> (3), <u>few people</u> (2), <u>almost no one</u> (1)						
2	Generally speaking, I trust other people living close to me in Marikana: <u>almost everyone</u> (5), <u>most people</u> (4), <u>some people</u> (3), <u>few people</u> (2), <u>almost no one</u> (1)						
3	I feel safe here in Marikana during the day: <u>almost always</u> (5), <u>most of the time</u> (4), <u>sometimes</u> (3), <u>rarely</u> (2), or <u>almost never</u> (1)						
4	I feel safe here in Marikana at night: <u>almost always</u> (5), <u>most of the time</u> (4), <u>sometimes</u> (3), <u>rarely</u> (2), or <u>almost never</u> (1)						

I will read a few statements on society and politics. Here, please tell me whether you agree strongly (AS), just agree (A), disagree (D), disagree strongly (DS), or have no opinion (N).

#	Statement	AS	A	N	D	DS	DK
<b>Ask people either questions 1 &amp; 2 (interview 1, 3 etc.), or 1f &amp; 2f (interview 2, 4 etc.)</b>							
1	I will help my neighbour in an emergency						
1f	I will help my neighbour in an emergency <u>if I know he is a foreigner</u>						
2	If I see a skollie stealing from a spaza shop in Marikana, I will try and do something about it						
2f	If I see a skollie stealing from a spaza shop in Marikana, I will try and do something about it <u>if I know it is owned by a foreigner</u>						
<b>On 2/2f, if agree or agree strongly: What will you do?</b>							
<b>Ask everybody questions 3 – 8</b>							
3	I don't mind it if a foreigner is living next to me						
4	I will take part in action to prevent foreigners from opening a business in Marikana						
5	Voting in a local government election will help us get services from the City						
6	Protesting against the City is an effective way to get better services						
7	Among poor South Africans, workers respect unemployed people						
8	Among poor South Africans, workers have the same goals as unemployed people						

Lastly I will read four pairs of statements. Tell me which one you agree with more, and whether you agree (A) or agree strongly (AS).

#	Statement	AS	A	Neither	DK
1	a) <i>The government is like a parent. It should decide what is good for us.</i>				
	b) <i>The government is like our worker. We are the bosses and should tell government what to do.</i>				
2	a) <i>Men make better leaders than women.</i>				
	b) <i>Women and men should have the same chance of being elected to lead.</i>				
3	a) <i>We can depend on the courts to protect our rights.</i>				
	b) <i>We are the ones who make our own rights real.</i>				
4	a) <i>South Africa should belong to all who live in it.</i>				
	b) <i>In South Africa, rights should be for locals, not foreigners.</i>				

[Please speak to your main interviewee]

Thank you for your time. Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up interview?

[If yes] May I have your contact number, please?

Section X: Interview details	
<b>X1</b> Follow-up?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes: contact number here <input type="text"/> <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>X2</b> What language was the interview conducted in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Xhosa <input type="checkbox"/> English
<b>X3</b> How interested was the main interviewee in the questions? (1= Very uninterested ... 5 = Very interested)	<input type="text"/>
<b>X4</b> How easy was it to talk to the main interviewee? (1= Very difficult ... 5 = Very easy)	<input type="text"/>

Any other notes?

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## **Postscript 1: On the role of the observer**

In this dissertation, I have focused on the objects of study (the land invasion and emerging grassroots governance) while minimising discussion of my own role in the research. This may seem artificial and unsatisfactory. This postscript attempts to remedy this by laying out necessary facts about how I first made contact with Marikana, and reflecting on the research paradigm I adopted.

I was introduced to Marikana through the resident fieldworker and interpreter in UCT's Centre for Social Science Research, whose friend was a leader in the Rolihlahla Park committee. But a picture of organising in Marikana would not have been complete without contact with the Marikana Development Forum (MDF). As explained in Chapter 1, I got in touch with MDF leaders by asking residents in their area of influence to introduce me to them. This meant that my access to Marikana was controlled by and mediated through my contact with the local leadership. In practice, as street committees act as gatekeepers for their communities, it would have been impossible and even ill-advised to attempt to make contact otherwise.<sup>43</sup> This was not such a problem for my subject matter, the emergent organizing and leadership practices of a new informal settlement.<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless, this has implications for the research agenda in South African township politics in general—it restricts the possibility of studying grassroots organizing from the perspective of local constituents. It is certainly not a problem unique to this dissertation.

How I was perceived (my identity) could also have affected my informants' reactions to me. As someone of ethnic Chinese descent, I was a visible outsider in Marikana. I found that this made me less suspicious and threatening a presence, and more an object of curiosity.

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<sup>43</sup> Without engaging the leadership, I would most likely have been expelled from the settlement. As it happened, my survey team was 'rounded up' in its first week of surveys in Marikana Two, as the MDF leadership had neglected to inform their street committees that they would be starting work! I might also have aggravated the tense relations described in Chapter 4 between Rolihlahla and Marikana Two.

<sup>44</sup> It might call into question the true efficacy of leadership practices that were intended to generate legitimation, though I have focused on describing them and refrained from evaluating them

Stock stereotypes<sup>45</sup> predominated Marikana residents' reactions towards me. Nevertheless, after I had progressed beyond introductions to conducting extended interviews and field observations, I had no reason to suspect that I might be being treated differently from any other researcher. The more consequential identity was that of a UCT student researcher. I found that some respondents were familiar with the practices of survey research—for instance, one had previously been trained as a Census fieldworker. These respondents tended to be economical with their descriptions of events, and impatient with follow-up questions or more discursive lines of questioning. One or two informants also took on an 'explainer' role, trying to simplify and generalise phenomena for me as a newcomer to South African townships (for instance, using phrases like "in our community", or talking about 'our' problems or motivations, when I was hoping for personal opinions). I worked around these problems partly through building rapport with the informants, through probing further when I sensed that they were not giving me the full story, and by triangulating the information they provided with other informants.

I worked within a positivist paradigm (Creswell 2007) throughout my fieldwork. This was perhaps unavoidable given the limited time I had in the field, and (more importantly) the limited time my respondents could spend talking to me. Leaders in an informal settlement had constant demands from their constituents, on top of the challenges of daily living like fetching water, getting food, and finding work; I felt it was a challenge to dig into their subjective understandings of their leadership roles or their committees' functions without imposing too much on their time and energy.

As mentioned in Chapter 5, I found that Marikana leaders were sometimes thinking through the practices of leadership as they went along. For instance, community leaders may not have had the time to explicitly define or question their leadership practices until they sat

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<sup>45</sup> As I walked about the informal settlement, teenagers would appear, imitating karate or kung-fu moves, young men would call out "Jackie Chan!" and older adults would ask if I was selling anything (ethnic Chinese people are perhaps most familiar as shopkeepers in most South African townships).

down to talk to me. This could mean that they had switched from talking about their current, extant leadership practices, to speaking about their normative ideal of leadership (a positivist interpretation); or that they might have been developing their own subjective understanding of leadership by weaving together popular understandings of "what leaders do" with their own experiences and aspirations (a social constructivist view). I took the positivist lens when doing the fieldwork, generally attempting to tease apart 'objective' descriptions from 'normative' ideas by asking committee members to give concrete examples (for instance, to describe an actual dispute they had resolved). Because I focused my attention on actual practices of grassroots governance, this positivist lens was generally adequate. Nonetheless, a different researcher working in a different paradigm might well have ended up studying other aspects of Marikana's grassroots leadership.

A researcher—through asking informants to articulate their routines and practices—may, arguably, affect his or her object of study. I think this is certainly possible. However, I would argue that in this current study, my interventions were of limited impact compared to the repertoire or bricolage of practices (Scott 2003, 171) of South African grassroots governance, the daily demands of their constituents, and the influence and legitimacy of external social movement organisations like Ses'khona.

Though it might be thought that positivism is unable to capture the nuances of how informants and the researcher interact and generate a mutual understanding of the object of study, its limitations are less severe if one incorporates a perspective of *change*. Tracing change over time can be seen as a halfway house between studying a static organisation (positivist) and the creation of shared understandings (social constructivist), since changes in shared understandings (brought about by meetings, decisions, and common experiences) trigger changes in organisation. Change is a theme throughout in Chapter 4: it documents how Marikana's structures of grassroots governance developed, stratified, re-constituted

themselves, and came into conflict with each other. Since the objects of study in Chapter 4 were grassroots governance structures and forces that drove their evolution (which *are* objectively-existing phenomena), it follows that the constructivist approach is not particularly advantageous, compared to if it had been a phenomenological study in a more settled context. Lastly—bringing the argument full circle—it would have been far harder to take a social constructivist view of community organising, given that my entry into Marikana was negotiated through the community organisers themselves, and issues of power and influence were never far from their minds.

I would defend my approach as producing a much-needed view of grassroots governance in a new informal settlement and its potential, problems, and limits. In my view, the positivist approach brought clarity and immediacy to the study, and lowered the demands on informants' time and energy. And I would argue that because there was no other way to enter the site except by negotiating with the leadership, taking a positivist view and generally sticking to facts I could independently verify made the study more rigorous.

## Postscript 2: The meeting as an alternative unit of analysis

One might question Meyer and Rowan's assertion that "the building blocks for organizations [are] littered around the societal landscape", ready for assembly (1977, 345). As my informants sought to draw parallels between their new grassroots structures and older organisational forms like street committees and development forums, I perhaps adopted these parallels too uncritically, and thus foreclosed for myself the possibility of describing Marikana's grassroots structures and activities in terms of anything other than the existing repertoires of organisational forms and practices in South African townships. In a personal communication, Dr. Marcelle Dawson brought to my attention that some scholars working at the interface of organisational theory and social movement studies have proposed using meetings as the unit of analysis (Schwartzman 1989; Haug 2013). This postscript explores some problems I might have been able to avoid by following that approach, rather than adopting organisations as the unit of analysis.

Chapter 4 focused on Marikana's grassroots structures. But it is unclear that organisation/organising is inevitable, or that all organisations exhibit a common set of characteristics. Ahrne and Brunsson (2011) have discussed the idea of "partial organisation"—that organisations may decide to adopt some but not all of the elements of organisation<sup>46</sup>. They argue that this approach emphasises the agency of participants and of the organisation itself, as organisations make decisions about their structure, membership, and rules through meetings (ibid., 8). It would also recognise that over time, institutional arrangements may slowly begin to take on the characteristics and functions of organisations.

Moreover, the limited evidence we have suggests that organisations have not always been pivotal in South African social movement mobilisations. Just considering housing-related mobilisations, word spread among friends and neighbours in cases such as the Door

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<sup>46</sup> They define 'organization' as consisting of five elements: they control their *membership*, enforce a *hierarchy* and *rules* that members follow, *monitor* compliance with their rules, and enforce or encourage compliance with their prerogatives through *sanctions*.

Kickers' movement in Delft South, Cape Town (Oldfield 2000, 866), or the emergence of the Freedom Park informal settlement (Development Action Group 2009, 17). In both these cases, organising came later, as a survival strategy when faced with external pressure (i.e., court action). This was true in Marikana too,<sup>47</sup> though I would argue Marikana's organising was driven by multiple imperatives of legitimation, competition within the informal settlement, demands from constituents, and through engagement with external organisations; legal action was only one factor.

In response to partial organisation and the limited role of organisations in social movements, Haug (2013) has argued that *meetings* are a social infrastructure that fulfil some of the functions of *organisations* in more settled contexts—something that has been relatively neglected in the social movement literature (ibid., 708). While the fieldwork was designed and conducted with *organisations* in mind, I now find that having *meetings* as the unit of analysis might have freed me from the 'teleological' assumption (that organisation is inevitable), and directed my focus even more towards the processes of organising.

Ahrne and Brunsson (2011, 8) observe that organisation is the result of a conscious decision *to organise*—a decision which can be derailed despite the efforts of organisers. Organisation is not inevitable, and adopting the organisation-centric approach could under-emphasise the agency of individual social movement participants in the early stages of a collective action, when no clear leadership or organisation has coalesced.

Applying the meeting lens to Marikana's early days could have helped shed light on questions about the governance structures, such as why Marikana residents needed (or thought they needed) leaders and committees. The analysis in Chapter 4 could be criticised for presupposing too much: I may have inadvertently assumed that the reality of concepts like

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<sup>47</sup> In fact, though it is certainly not the first quantitative work in an informal settlement (see for instance Crankshaw, Heron, and Hart 1992), this study is (to my knowledge) the first to produce positive evidence that the majority of participants in a land invasion are mobilised through an underlying *passive network* of shared interests, operating through the medium of physical space.



"chairman", "street committee", "meeting", or "election" matched up to the idealised descriptions given in the literature and by the committee members themselves. To deal with this, I always sought to clarify whether practices and routines matched up with how they were first described to me (cf. for instance the discussion of elections on pp. 119–121). But a meeting-centred approach might have sensitised me more to the reality that roles and titles were being redefined at meetings and in ground practice.

Moreover, organisations may face internal and external stressors and even disband, as was the case for the Marikana task team. The meeting lens facilitates the researcher's scrutiny of individual- or faction-level motivations which may be harder, though not impossible, to see at the organisational level. In the end, I did use meetings to structure some reconstructions of events, for instance when Siyabulela intervened to influence the formation of the Marikana Development Forum (pp. 111–112). Looking back, this part of the analysis in Chapter 4 is quite telling, as it shows the limits of the organisation-centric approach: I switched to meetings to drive the narrative when organisational form was in flux (the Marikana task team had yet to be reconstituted as the MDF), the interests of internal and external stakeholders were coming into conflict, and the legitimacy of the current organisation was being disputed.

Adopting meetings as the unit of analysis would also have avoided the problem that I faced in the single case study design, which was that I did not observe first-hand the organisational practices in other street committees. I depended on the secondary literature to build my understanding of what street committees and development forums do, but this was an imperfect solution as I had no direct experience of street committees elsewhere. A meeting-centred approach would have allowed for comparisons across time but within Marikana itself, and would have made for a more natural multiple case study design.

However, the meetings perspective poses its own challenges. In practice it is all but impossible to be "in the right place at the right time" to witness the earliest, most interesting meetings of an episode of collective action (for instance, the ones in which the Marikana committees were constituted for the first time). It would also have been difficult to obtain permission to attend those meetings, since some land occupiers (operating in legally-grey space) are less receptive to outsiders than others before trust is established. Minutes or meeting notes may supplement direct observation, but these may be affected by the note-taker's or organisation's interests and biases. Lacking some key data points, it is difficult to envisage how an outsider might be able to produce a meeting-centric analysis of a collective action or social movement organisation. Conversely, in the more mature stages of a collective action, meetings may take place at many different scales (from the mass meetings at Bhekela with hundreds of participants and a community-wide agenda; to meetings of several neighbours or households with the intent of resolving a localised issue or dispute between neighbours). It would then be a challenge for a single researcher to gather a good sample of cases to study at all these scales. In sum, while the meeting perspective affords the conceptual advantages I outlined above, I would caution that it also poses a more formidable barrier to entry for the outsider.

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